Helpmann's return; reviews and pictures

Dance and Dancers

AY 1958

This month's full ballet guide

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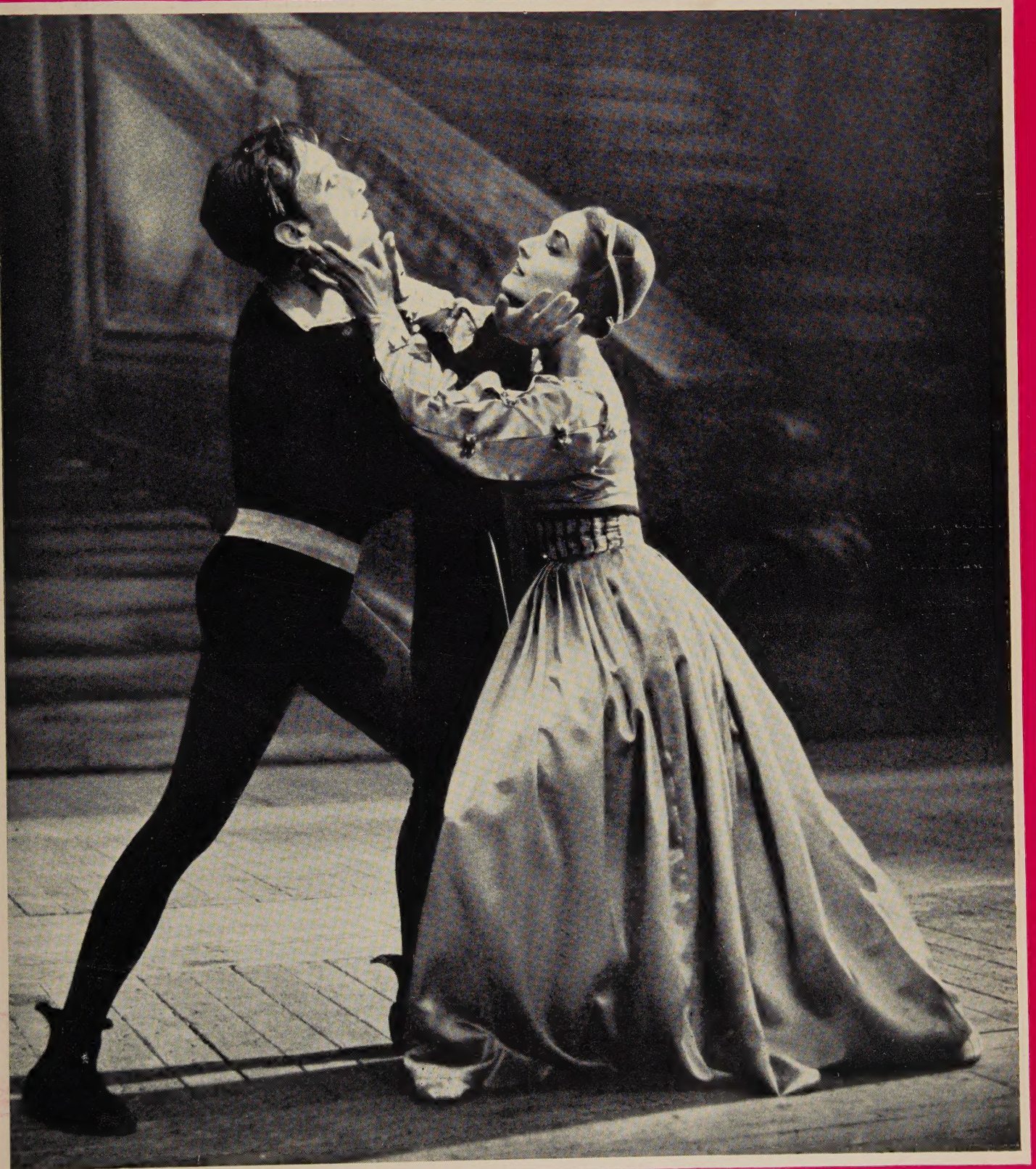
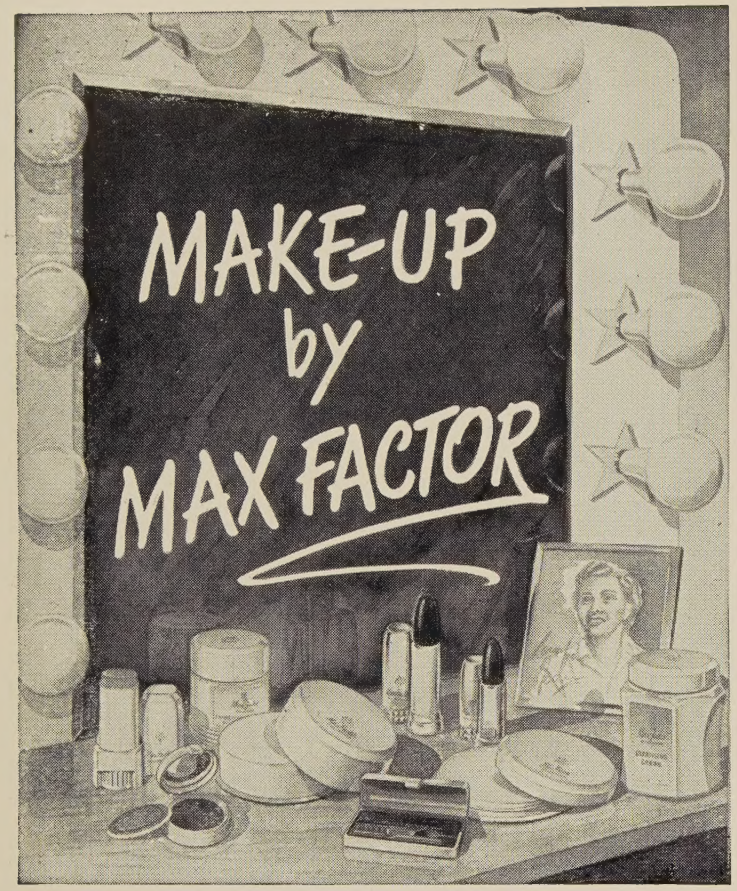


ROBERT HELPMANN and ANYA LINDEN

in Helpmann's *Hamlet* revived by the Royal Ballet



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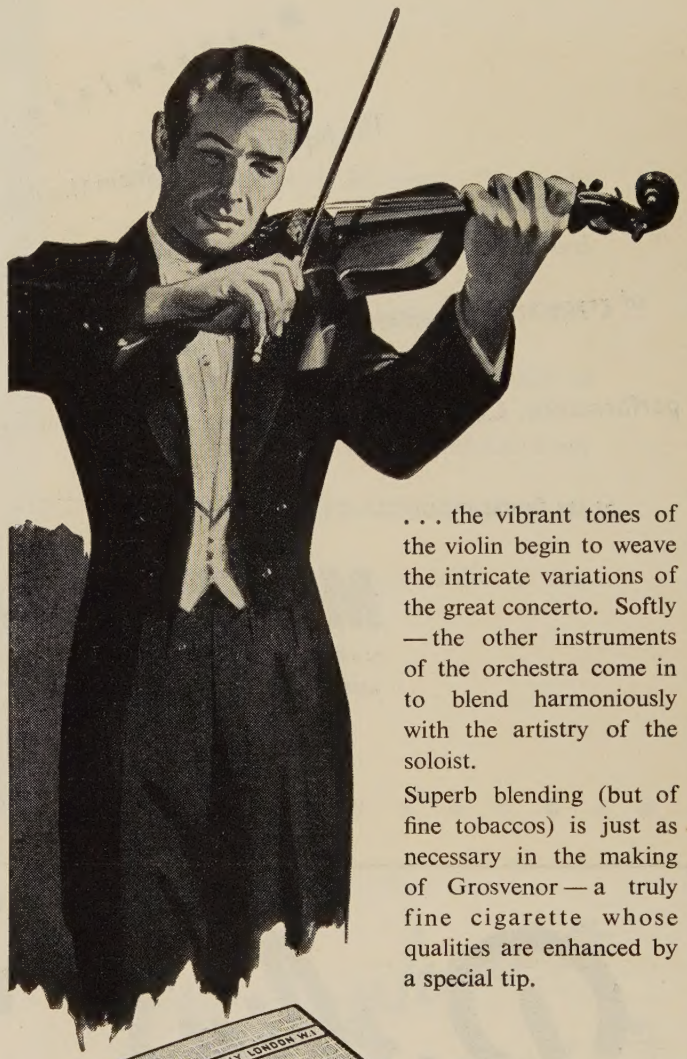

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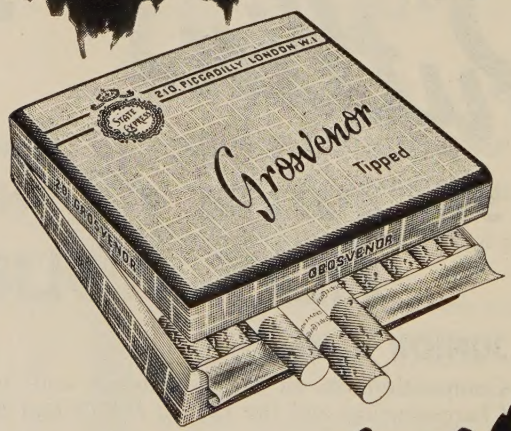

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Personalities of the Month

Photo : David Sim.

ELIZABETH WEST and PETER DARRELL

ONLY the slightly crazy would dare to start a ballet company at the present time. Consequently Elizabeth West and Peter Darrell, the joint Artistic Directors of Western Theatre Ballet, should perhaps be regarded with a judicious mixture of sympathy and admiration. When they first formed their company last year in Bristol, few would have held out much hope for its survival. Yet now it has embarked on its second provincial tour, and although its condition is of necessity precarious, there is a growing conviction that the determination and tenacity of these two young people will ensure that it eventually becomes a permanent feature of the English ballet scene.

They approach ballet from completely different viewpoints—which is probably why together they make up a formidable production team. Although Elizabeth West studied dancing with Espinosa, a great deal of her training came from the legitimate theatre, principally the Bristol Old Vic, where she later gave movement classes to the drama students. Darrell's career, while equally varied, has been exclusively in classical ballet. He was trained at the Royal Ballet School, and danced with the Theatre Ballet for the first two years of its existence. As a dancer he had a long spell with London's Festival Ballet and also quite a number of foreign companies, but it is as a choreographer that he is best known. Elizabeth West is also a choreographer, yet her achievements in this direction do not rank with Darrell's whose ballet *The Prisoners* would probably be included in most lists of significant ballets seen in Britain since the war.

Western Theatre Ballet is intended to be a provincial company, and its Directors are still struggling for local financial support. But also, strangely enough, it is placing itself in the *avant garde* of British ballet development. Already, for example, it is the first English company to produce a ballet to *musique concrète*. If luck only remains with them, these two have a very great deal to offer to our still too narrowly restricted dance world.

May 1958 9th YEAR OF PUBLICATION Vol. 9 No. 5

Dance and Dancers

Editor: PETER WILLIAMS *Associate Editor:* CLIVE BARNES
Assistant Editor : E. C. MASON
WORLD'S LARGEST SALE IN THE FIELD

Have a Modern Outlook!

IT is no use pretending that the dance in Britain has at the moment reached anything other than a stalemate—few new works are created and foreign companies seem reluctant to appear before us to give inspiration and fresh impetus. The situation has become such that it seems necessary for some clear thinking about what channels of the dance we have not explored as thoroughly as we might have done. The branch of dance which immediately comes to mind is the Modern Dance.

The very title is absurd because something that is modern today becomes old hat tomorrow. In this respect I remember Hanya Holm, the famous American choreographer now in this country to mount the dances for *My Fair Lady*, once offering some sort of alternative. "I hate the expression Modern Dance," she said. "Myself, I just call it Dance." Well, this does get out of it in a kind of way but it does not really solve the problem. Two other factors are also obstacles in the path of this form of dance achieving anything like a popular success in Britain—the fact that it can provide a field day for amateurishness and pretentiousness and also that there seem to be few critics in England who know how to do it full justice—and very serious obstacles these are.

We hear all the time about the wonderful work which is being done in America and we have also been privileged to see some of the fruits of these struggles in the work of Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, José Limón and occasionally in films and musicals. That's fine, you may say, but nothing like that happens in Britain. If you think that, then apparently you are wrong. Quite a lot happens in Britain but it happens in little watertight compartments spread all over the country. So dotted around and so unpublicity-seeking are these disciples that we seldom hear of them.

This seems a pretty poor show because probably a lot of hard work goes into these various enterprises and the eventual result is general discouragement that they are unnoticed—just poor relations. The fault, I am afraid, is mainly theirs—not ours. There is splendid work being done and it is time that they all got together and trumpeted their presence from the rooftops. Surely there must be somebody somewhere with the foresight and organising power of a De Valois who can weld all these groups together, somebody who has the diplomacy to pool all their ideas? Surely there must be somebody who can envisage a future when a Royal Modern Dance company can take its honourable place side by side with the Royal Ballet rather than face a future consisting of a weary vista of little hole-and-corner shows in off-beat church halls?

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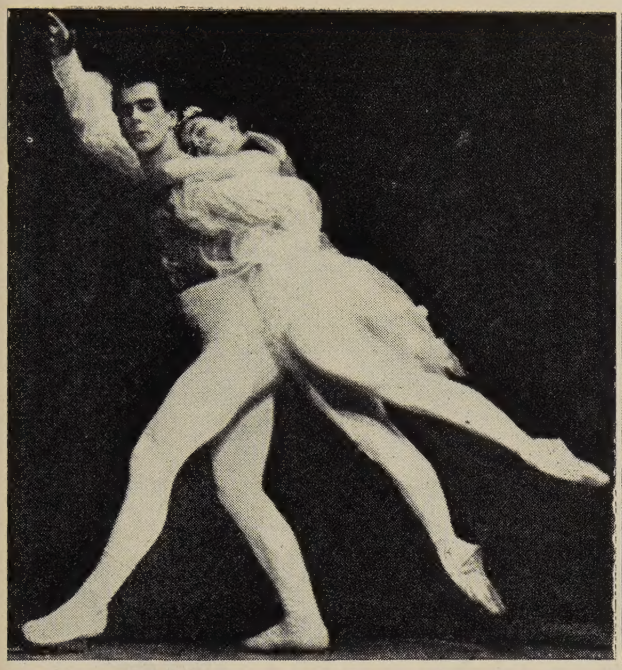

FIRST IMPRESSION: *Donald MacLeary and Lynn Seymour in the* pas de deux *from Alan Beale's ballet which he also designed. All the dancers and the choreographer are members of the Royal Ballet (II).*

CARNIVAL IN TRINIDAD: *David Berahzer getting under the sticks in* Limbo *from Boscoe Holder's suite of dances from the Caribbean which made a lively ending to the programme. Photos: Tony Armstrong Jones.*

Ballet comes to brighten-up Sunday

The first performance by Sunday Ballet Club, organised by James Ranger and Francis Sitwell, was given at Wyndham's Theatre on Sunday evening, March 23.

by CLIVE BARNES

The Objectives

LEAVING aside for the moment any discussion of the individual ballets, it might be useful to enquire what the Sunday Ballet Club's objectives are, or even what they should be. Loosely it has taken upon itself the functions earlier carried out by Ballet Workshop and the Sunday Choreographer's organisation run by dancers of the Royal Ballet. I say "loosely" because in fact this present club differs considerably from its two predecessors. They both had an organisation behind them, highly developed and relatively elaborate in the case of Ballet Workshop, and less markedly so in the case of the Royal Ballet venture, but the Sunday Ballet Club is very simply a presenting organisation, a shop window in which choreographers, new and old, are invited to place their wares. It has the chance to become the centre, or perhaps better, the focus of all progressive dance activity and thought in Britain today. Such a focus is needed, and this club could provide it.

The club is run by amateurs, and it should have surprised or dismayed no one that in its first programme a number of mistakes were made. It is also reasonable to suppose that after the club has got through its teething troubles, these mistakes will be avoided. A few of the apparent errors are, however, inherent in its constitution, and we must to an extent learn to accept the new organisation with its blemishes, for better or for worse. It starts off with the disadvantage of having no theatre of its own, no full-time officials who can devote their lives to its aims, and none of the very positive advantages of being closely associated with an existing ballet company. The ballets on the first programme were rehearsed in different parts of the country, the dancers were all brought together on the morning of the performance and the whole production had to be staged in a few brief hours. This is nobody's idea of the way in which a performance of ballet should be put on, but you can no more criticise the inevitable than you can stop on act of God.

The club is trying to produce new choreographers and new ideas. These tasks are unrewarding. Success is almost, although luckily not quite, impossible. First ballets by untried choreographers are rarely any good at all, and while it is easy after the event to proclaim that the producing organisation has not been selective enough in its choice of the untried, how can one choose from things which by their nature do not yet exist?

There were, however, at least two aspects of this first performance that were slightly disquieting, and caused their opening salvo to misfire. The first of these is the lack of artistic direction, which was, for the most part, painfully evident. The club, as constituted, has an executive committee, production committee, and advisory committee. This latter group comprises Dame Ninette de Valois, Marie Rambert, Sacheverell Sitwell, Anton Dolin, Cyril Beaumont, John Field and Michael Wood. Unfortunately up to the time of the first production it had not met, so consequently the "invaluable advice" for which it was thanked in the programme must needs have been of a somewhat disjointed nature, and only two members of this committee were present at the dress rehearsal.

Naturally the club is never going to be able to provide the powerful artistic direction that ideally should inspire a ballet company. This is, after all, only a spare-time venture. Yet it should be possible to give its young choreographers stronger artistic guidance than they appear to receive at present, and I suggest that a smaller, far less illustrious, but rather more active, form of artistic committee might well meet this need.

The other problem, not unlinked with the first but more a matter for executive control than artistic administration, is the question of providing a balanced programme that fulfils to the utmost the experimental nature of the club. This first programme, which was put on in a hurry, perhaps even too much of a hurry, consisted of two apprentice ballets, pure and simple, the première of an experimental work to be taken into the repertoire of an established ballet company, and a display of West Indian dancing that, disregarding its merits, was more in the nature of a cabaret item than a coherent ballet. On paper this sounds alarming, but no one should sneer at this initial apparent disavowal of the club's primary purposes before very carefully considering the difficulties involved. A programme to be presented before the poor, suffering, but we hope paying, public, has to be of a certain length. This length can provide a major snag, for not only are there few dancers with the ability to produce a ballet, there are not even so very many more with either the time or the inclination. Like its predecessors in the experimental field, the Sunday Ballet Club found itself having to pad its programme.

I suspect that it will always have to pad its programme, although in future possibly the padding could be better chosen. It was a good idea to offer hospitality to the Western Theatre Ballet's production of Wolfgang Brunner's *Girl in a Mask* — a

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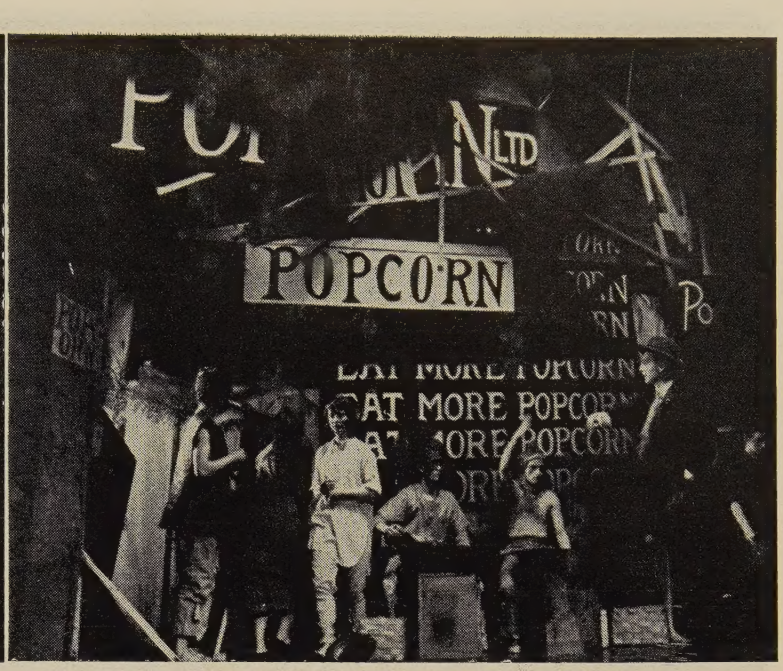
GIRL IN A MASK: *A Girl (Anna Paskevska), who is a prostitute, falls in love with a boy (Laverne Meyer). A moment from Wolfgang Brunner's ballet.*
Photo: Tony Armstrong Jones.



POPCORN FACTORY: The scene in the factory which is run, for a time, by the Girl disguised as the Stranger who is also the overseer. The picture gives some idea of Dan Snyder's settings, which were changed, mainly by the dancers, through the ballet's length. *Photo: Ken Ross-Mackenzie.*

work in every way fully in accord with the club's aims. However, this was an opportunity unlikely to occur again, and the club must be prepared to take a greater part of the burden for its subsequent performances.

In its future programme planning I suggest that in the first place it throws its net rather wider and tries to interest a few of the struggling Modern Dance groups in London. It should also make very determined efforts to secure the co-operation of established choreographers anxious to produce experimental ballets that will be hated by the critics and would be death in the commercial theatre.

Yet a little more will be required if this club is to become the centre of activity which our fast atrophying art today needs. The club cannot become a workshop in the truest sense. However, I would like to see it attempt to act in some small way as a kind of laboratory, where ballet and ideas about ballets could be analysed and dissected. I think it would be a most valuable extension of the club's activities if it not only presented new works, but, taking its lead from the Society for the Promotion of New Music, it provided facilities for the free and informed discussion of such works. Possibly, in association with London's two major ballet clubs, it could arrange an open meeting one week after each performance to discuss in the presence of the choreographers and dancers the merits, failings and ideas of the production.

PERFORMANCE

FIRST IMPRESSION

Choreography and Costumes, Alan Beale. Music, Kenneth Leighton.
LYNN SEYMOUR SUSAN ALEXANDER
ELIZABETH ALDERTON DONALD MACLEARY SIMON MOTTRAM
CHRISTOPHER GABLE

THIS proved to be a slight plotless ballet. It was mounted upon dancers of Royal Ballet II by Alan Beale, himself a member of the company. Something in the nature of a first five-finger exercise in choreography, it revealed a limited, yet not unfluent invention which might one day be developed. Its principal defect was its failure to develop a mood or generate emotion. The choreography had neither genuine originality nor distinction. Its wispy fragments failed to form any coherent dance statement, and in this it was probably not helped by the rather uninteresting choice of music. When Beale has learnt the vital lesson that all ballets — plotless no less than any other — must have a meaning of some kind, his work will be able to make a stronger impression than this first. Yet the experience he acquired from this essay will undoubtedly prove useful to him, and he has no cause to feel discouraged.

The costumes, designed by Beale himself, were not altogether flattering, and the combination of pastel colours with an intricate design was a mistake. The ballet was quite handsomely performed by its young cast, among whom the Canadian girl Lynn Seymour showed perhaps more clearly than ever that hers, properly used, could develop into a very considerable talent.

AFFAIR

Choreography, David Drew. Music, George W. Duning, from the film Picnic
JACQUELINE WATCHAM
DAVID DREW

THIS, although only a dramatic *pas de deux*, was a more ambitious and also more successful venture. It tells, with commendable brevity, of an affair between a highly-strung girl and a thoughtless boy. They meet at a party, make love on a beach, and part at another party. For two-thirds of its course, the capsule drama was most effective, but unfortunately it collapsed in the last scene. Here the motive for the lovers' parting, daringly, but unsuccessfully, conveyed by a spotlight symbolising the boy's aspirations, love of the unknown or what-you-will was not made sufficiently clear. The background chorus of shadowy jivers in the party scenes was a good idea, and it would have been better, if more conventional, had one of these figures emerged from the gloom in the last scene to provide a more obvious reason for the boy's disaffection.

The ballet was not greatly helped by the sugary molasses of the symphonic swing score — taken needless to say from a film — to which it was set. This had a basic insincerity which could not but influence the total effect of the work. Drew's choreography, strongly influenced by the "cool" idiom of modern American musicals, was unpretentious and quite frequently well pointed. There were also quite a few moments of stage-craft, in which Peter Jay's intelligent lighting also played its part, that were remarkable for such an inexperienced choreographer.

Drew had provided himself with a rôle very different from the classical parts in which he is already becoming familiar at Covent Garden. His dancing was smooth and easy, but his characterisation showed a trace of self-consciousness that was not always appropriate. Jacqueline Watcham, a Covent Garden *corps de ballet* dancer, was equally effective and showed a well-calculated dramatic range that could never have been guessed from her anonymous portrayals of swans and sylphides.

GIRL IN A MASK

Choreography and Direction, Wolfgang Brunner. Music, Thomas Rajna. Décor and Costumes, Dan Snyder. Presented by The Western Theatre Ballet.
Girl ..... ANNA PASKEVSKA
Stranger ..... ERLING SUNDE
The Lover ..... LAVERNE MEYER
Citizens

THIS ballet made a lot of people very angry indeed — and I am all for ballets that make a lot of people feel anything. It is an allegory of power based, fairly loosely, on Berthold Brecht's *The Good Woman of Setzuan*. I am quite sure that it should never have been made into a ballet at all, because its literary nature is fundamentally unsuitable for choreographic translation. However, even if it was ill-advised, parts of it, particularly in the work's second half, had considerable interest. The ballet opens with an apparently

Continued on page 34

Helpmann's

THE RAKE'S PROGRESS

TO celebrate his return to the Royal Ballet, the company whose present eminence owes much to the period when he led it, Robert Helpmann chose to appear in De Valois's *The Rake's Progress* on March 3.

After the Satan rôle in De Valois's other ballet *Job*, that of the Georgian young man who squanders his inheritance is one of the first important male rôles in British ballet. Helpmann took it over after the Rake's creator, Walter Gore, left the company, and it is a rôle which many of the younger generation will always associate with him. Although the theatrical personality of Helpmann is such that his every appearance is indelibly etched in the mind whether you like what he does or not, it should never be forgotten that even after Gore this particular rôle was given fine performances by Harold Turner, Henry Legerton and David Blair.

The anatomy of the Rake is curious, and it is necessary to consider it before passing judgment on the performance it gets today. In the beginning he is a likeable but weak young man who, because of his inheritance, is sponged upon by a typical cross-section of people who will always sponge upon people, whether they inherit money or win it in the football pools. As the claws of the spongers tighten so the Rake gets caught up in an inextricable web and gradually starts to disintegrate until he finally collapses in Bedlam. I may be quite wrong, but I shall never believe that he was wholly unpleasant in the beginning; he must, I think, have had a certain amount of charm because this makes the eventual catastrophe even more pitiful. It was in this way, at any rate, that Walter Gore saw him when he created the ballet.

From the point of view of actual dancing the rôle is not complicated and certainly does not exact the physical wear and tear that is the fate of those who play Satan in *Job*. It is a rôle in which the whole body and musical sense of the dancer has to express the entire tragedy.

When Helpmann first took over the rôle the balance of the ballet became slightly deranged. He saw the Rake as a villain right through so that at the end it seemed that he had received his just reward rather than as a creature to be pitied. But that was the way Helpmann played him and he commanded our respect because, in his own way, it was a completely honest interpretation and there was not the slightest doubt about its theatrical impact.

But take away that theatrical impact and an unfortunate thing happens — the Rake merely becomes a shadowy creature who almost ceases to exist when other characters are on the stage. Had the performance on March 3 been the occasion for showing a new dancer in the rôle it would have been considered to be a commendable attempt at something. But Helpmann has become

THE RAKE'S PROGRESS: *TOP LEFT, The Rake (Helpmann, centre) is embarrassed by a Mother (Catherine Boulton) who demands money for the Betrayed Girl (Julia Farron). CENTRE, The Dancing Master (Brian Shaw) gives the Rake a lesson in dancing and deportment. BOTTOM, The Rake (left) squandering his substance in a brothel, watches a Dancer (Gerd Larsen) with his Friend (Pirmin Trecu).*

Return

Robert Helpmann's return to the Royal Ballet, as both artist and choreographer, has been the principal feature of the present Covent Garden season.
Performances reviewed by PETER WILLIAMS and CLIVE BARNES.
Photographed by ROY ROUND.

an almost legendary name and even if his dancing abilities could not be expected to stand up to the present high standards of Royal Ballet male dancing, the least that could be expected was a show of that style which is the hall-mark of great artists approaching middle-age, especially those who were brought up in the Diaghilev era.

Helpmann, who in the past had always been considered to be the sublime master of scene-stealing — and frankly it was that which made his appearances always exciting if hardly "cricket" — suddenly found everyone else stealing his scenes — Brian Shaw, a brilliant and one of the best-ever Dancing Masters in scene one; Gerd Larsen, as the red-stockinged floozie, and Margaret Hill, as the ballad singer, in scene two; the dancing of all the gamblers in scene three; and finally Ray Powell, as the Man with the Rope, in scene four. The Rake's final moment, and his greatest, when he is downstage on the prompt side, should show the utter disintegration of the character. Helpmann did a great deal of grimacing and business, at least so those in the front rows of the stalls informed me, but all this was not visible to spectators placed further back. He should have been capable of holding the attention of the entire audience, but attention kept on wandering to that pitiful and bedraggled group of cell-mates.

This may all sound grossly unfair to an artist of his undoubted calibre making his return to ballet and doubtless his performances gathered momentum later in the season when he was more used to the medium he has been divorced from for several years. But it became abundantly clear that this occasion was even further proof of the way the Royal Ballet has developed over the past few years.

Of the rest, Julia Farron gave a competent performance of the Betrayed Girl, but I have seen this always fine artist to better advantage. She seemed to be hurrying some of her movements and this resulted in a certain loss of poignancy in the complete interpretation. The company as a whole played these raffish characters with enormous gusto though it was not always easy to see them doing so owing to the appalling lighting — Brian Shaw had to dance his front-of-curtain solo in near-total darkness. I felt sorry for Gavin Gordon's apt score, for not only did it get rather slovenly treatment from the orchestra but what could stand up to the two Stravinsky scores — one non-vintage and one best vintage in *Scènes de Ballet* and *The Firebird* — which flanked it?

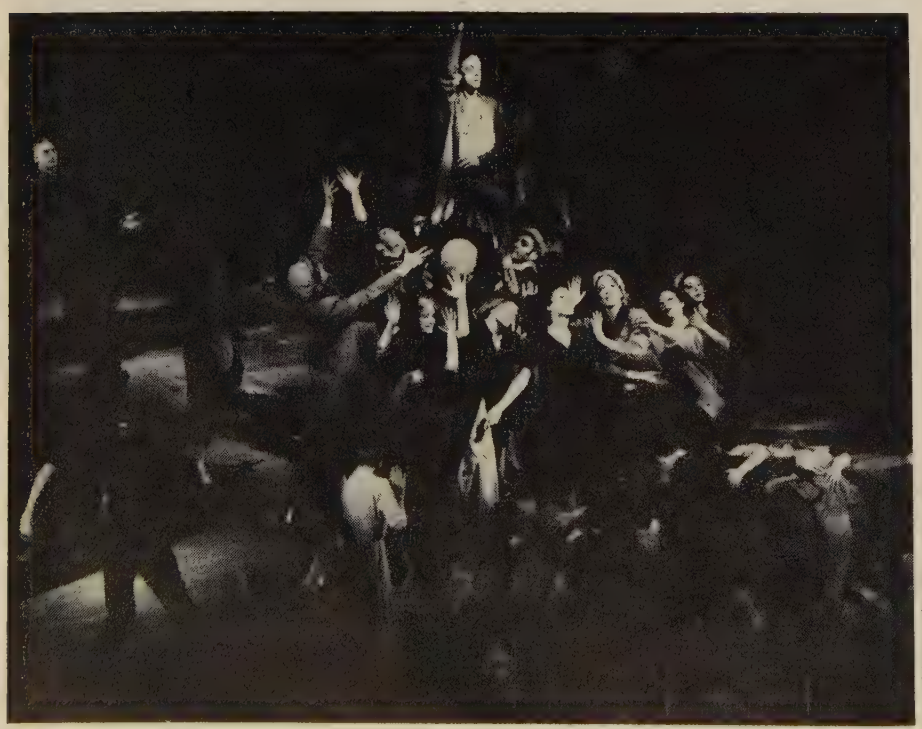
P. W.

COPPÉLIA

AFTER the somewhat flabby histrionics Helpmann had revealed in *The Rake's Progress,* his appearance as Dr. Coppélius — always one of his better rôles — proved considerably more welcome. Yet although his interpretation of the old toymaker in Delibes' ballet remained unquestionably good it is also over-rated. Absence is traditionally said to make the heart grow fonder; it also occasionally makes the heart grow wiser as well. During the lapse of time

THE RAKE'S PROGRESS: *The Rake (Helpmann, left) has finally sunk so low that he ends up in a Madhouse, where he is taunted by the Gentleman with a Rope (Ray Powell) and watched by a mad Violinist (Gary Burne).*
MIRACLE IN THE GORBALS *(below): The Prostitute (Julia Farron), who is later transformed by the Stranger into a figure of Magdalene-like purity.*

THE MIRACLE IN THE GORBALS: *Above, The Stranger (Robert Helpmann) raises the Suicide (Annette Page) from the dead. In the picture below the Stranger is seen being received with jubilation by the crowd. In front is the Suicide. In the background left can be seen the Official (John Hart) who resents the lessening of his power brought about by this miracle. By a ruse, the Official gets the Stranger to go to the Prostitute's room and he then incites the crowd against this unwelcome intrusion. The crowd turns on the Stranger and a gang slash him to death.*



since we last saw Helpmann's portrayal, our ideas of *Coppélia* and Coppélius have changed in the light of various new productions.

It was somehow symbolic of Helpmann's present approach that while appearing in the new "Osbert Lancaster" revival for the first time, he clung obstinately to the old cloak he had worn previously in the "Chappell" production.

Helpmann is a character actor who, and I think his appearances in the legitimate theatre amply illustrate the point, lacks spontaneity. His effects are too contrived for him ever to get under the skin of a part — instead he puts on an always clever and usually more or less appropriate mask. It is perhaps this inability that might be thought to have denied him the ultimate greatness of a Gielgud or a Redgrave. In ballet, audiences — luckily for all concerned — are far less demanding of their actors than in the legitimate theatre, and here Helpmann's magnificent assurance and timing, commanding stage personality and his superb professionalism (quite unapproached by any other British dancer) naturally carry all before them.

Yet for all his obvious effectiveness, his marvellous command over the audience and the equally obvious and quite unaffected respect in which he was held by his fellow artists, I found myself unable to respond completely to the potent Helpmann magic. I felt like the ragamuffin urchin who sits in the front row of the village hall and is firmly convinced he knows just how the conjuror pulls the rabbit out of the hat. He may be right, he may be wrong, but at any rate for him the show has lost its spontaneous power of enchantment.

All Helpman's old tricks were once again on view. The mechanically gliding walk (which *The Times* in its curiously authoritarian way commented on as a new touch) right down to the startled glance of horror when he sees his face in Swanilda's mirror, they were all there, as predictable as the antics of Norman Wisdom, a comedian with whom Helpmann has quite a lot in common.

This was not, however, altogether the Dr. Coppélius we knew from years back. It seemed as though Helpmann was consciously trying to underplay the character. The wilder excesses of his later youth have been abandoned, and he seriously attempted to keep his characterisation in the same focus as the surrounding production. His failure to achieve the balance he appeared to seek, was ironically in part the measure of his unique merits. As a personality in the theatrical, or perhaps better, show-biz sense, he was still so much bigger than everyone else on the stage, and this, added to a habit of scene-stealing which almost amounts to pathological kleptomania, inevitably resulted in him attempting that aim of all artists — the one-man show.

Remarkably enough the company, rising to the occasion wonderfully, did not let the old sorcerer get away with it. The effect Helpmann had on his colleagues was no less electric than that he exerted on his audience. There is not a shadow of doubt that however niggling one cares to be about Helpmann's own performance, his appearances with the company have done it a power of good. He had every cause for pride for the manner in which the company's affection and respect for his abilities have led it to bring out its best qualities, and given it a revitalised assessment of theatrical values. The present *Coppélia* production is far from perfect, but the *corps de ballet*, soloists and principals all gave it with immense verve and zest. Nerina's

Swanilda and Blair's Frantz were both impeccably danced, but what was perhaps more important was the fresh liveliness of their interpretations. Even the first act peasants, usually as wooden a bunch of Indians as one might find, had a sparkle and vivacity. The character dances, in which Ray Powell whizzed round like a Bolshoi sputnik, were specially commendable.

One way or another this was perhaps the best *Coppélia* I have ever seen from the Royal Ballet. The audience loved it — and loved Helpmann most of all — and while I personally thought that his was a shallow, rather vulgar and stupidly over-rated caricature, it would be foolish to protest too vehemently at a man who adds so much to the gaiety of nations and is furthermore the cause of so much wit in others.

C. B.

MIRACLE IN THE GORBALS

THE first of the Helpmann revivals was *Miracle in the Gorbals*. It was originally produced in 1944 at the time when Helpmann's meteoric career as a choreographer was at its height. It then created considerable critical controversy, although the balance of comment was in the ballet's favour, and it was considered significant enough for Arnold Haskell to devote a complete book to its analysis. It proved from the beginning to be immensely popular with audiences, and this popularity never flagged. It was nevertheless noticeable even before the work was shelved in 1950 that the climate of informed opinion was less kindly disposed to the ballet, and there was little outcry when it and its fellow altar-piece *Hamlet* were dropped from the repertory.

The story of a latterday saint, which is completely conveyed in choreography and mime, there being no programme note, was devised by Michael Benthall. There is nothing much wrong with the scenario except that it is lacking in true reverence, sensational in its appeal and lurid in its detail.

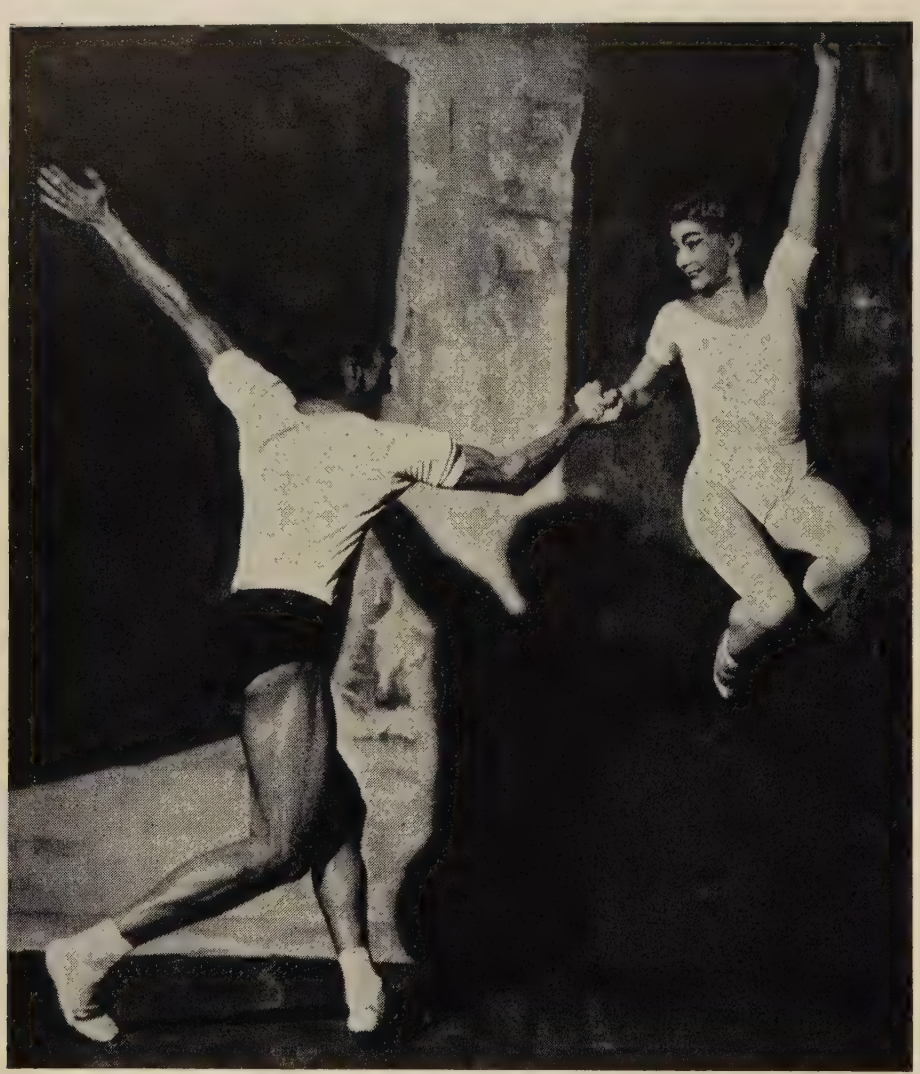
It is pretty fruitless to enquire, as many have done before, whether or not *Miracle in the Gorbals* is a ballet, as definitions are always as elastic or as tight as the definer wishes to make them. It is, after all, a work produced in a theatre by a ballet company, and all that need concern us is whether it was worth producing. Helpmann's choreography is a curious mixture of flat-footed classicism, steps deriving from ball-room dancing, stylised mime and completely naturalistic gesture. Any attempt that has been made to weld these disparate elements into a coherent expressive style is not apparent. Far too often Helpmann relies on conventional devices that would be acceptable enough in a revue sketch but could only be accepted by a ballet audience stunned into acquiescence by the racy "journalese" of the work's showily portentous message. Movement-clichés abound —the seductive gestures of the Prostitute, the tortured hand-clasping of the Official, the circular fervour of the crowd celebrating the miracle, to give only three examples —and these are seized upon by some of the audience.

The only point upon which everyone, and the ballet has at least as many devotees as denigrators, is agreed, is that *Miracle in the Gorbals* possesses an undeniable impact. But then, so does a boxing match. And there you get real blood, red and sticky. Others who dislike the kind of vicarious sadism implied by the razor-

Continued on page 21

HAMLET : *Ophelia (Anya Linden) and Laertes (David Blair) in a* pas de deux. *This expression of love is interrupted by Polonius (Franklin White), who dismisses his son before leading Ophelia to Hamlet.*

Below : In Hamlet's confused dream, Ophelia becomes transformed into the Player Queen. Linden, Julia Farron and Helpmann in the scene from the play which Hamlet has devised to trick his stepfather, Claudius, into confessing the guilt of his murder.



CONTREPOINTE : *Dick Sanders and Nicole Amigues in a* pas de deux *from Petit's abstract ballet, to Marius Constant music, which opened the programme.*
Below : *The company in* Contrepointe. *The picture gives some idea of the setting by Poliakoff.*

Ballets de

Three new ballets and Carmen **made Roland Petit's season of his Ballets de Paris at the Théâtre de l'Alhambra in Paris a great popular success.**
Reviewed by MARIE-FRANCOISE CHRISTOUT
Photographed by SERGE LIDO

ROLAND PETIT has made a brilliant return at the Théâtre de l'Alhambra, and this has to some extent compensated Parisian ballet lovers for the closure of the Paris Opéra and, especially, for certain "broken dates". After having tried his hand this past year at that rather hybrid art, large-scale revue, he has wisely returned to pure ballet. The same may be said of Renée Jeanmaire, who has abandoned singing to discover again with brilliance, in the ballet shoe her most expressive language.

However, while everyone appreciates the qualities of Petit and Jeanmaire and recognises the enormous success that their company has had, it must be said that the revival of *Carmen* shows it to be a work infinitely superior to the three new ballets given in the programme. Although strong support is given by Véronika Mlakar and Dick Sanders, Petit and Jeanmaire are surrounded by a *corps de ballet* which, despite the enlightened advice of Françoise Adret, fails to reach the standard of their previous company. Or is it our memories that are at fault?

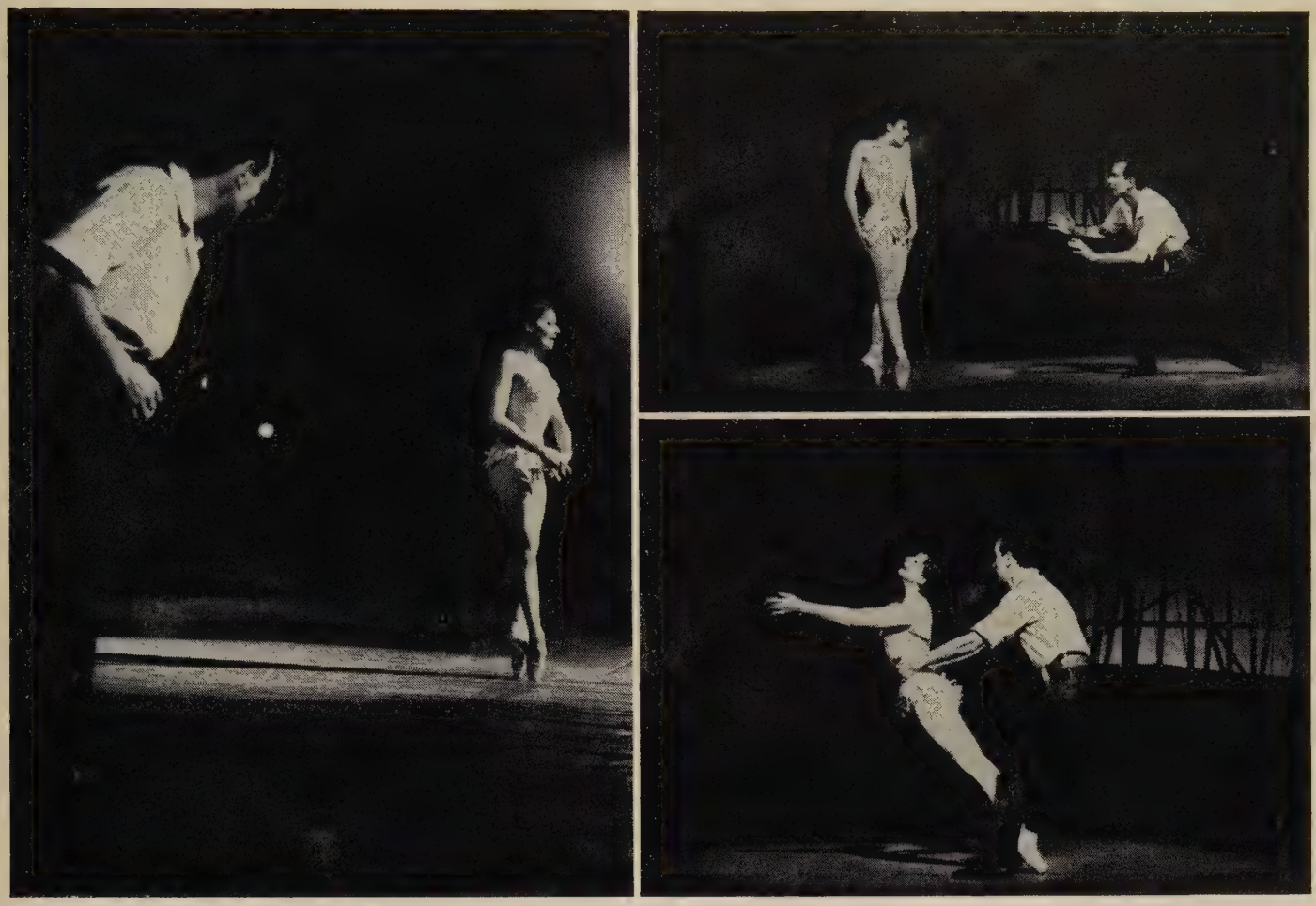
While these criticisms are questions of detail, the total effect is still agreeable, lively, well thought out, revealing once again the qualities Petit is known to possess. And *Carmen,* today as much as yesterday, still retains its seduction and remains one of ballet's dramatic masterpieces of the post-war years.

Contrepointe

Ballet by Roland Petit. Music by Marius Constant. Décors by Poliakoff.

Cast
NICOLE AMIGUES DICK SANDERS

Paris blaze back in triumph



LA ROSE DES VENTS: *Roland Petit and his wife, Zizi Jeanmaire, in the* pas de deux *which was the high-spot of this ballet with a book by Albert Vidalie. In the rôle of the barmaid who thinks she is a siren, Jeanmaire proved to be right back on form.*

RINO ADIPIETRO JANE LAOUST
MICHEL NUNES
and *corps de ballet.*

ROLAND PETIT has attempted to begin his programme with an exercise in style unusual for him, a pure *ballet de danse.* In effect we can take in the spirit of a joke its idea which he has taken directly from a technical quotation in the *Nouveau Larousse* dictionary. Translated literally it means: "The working head, fixed in rotation, can also move with a transverse action, which on a machine supports the job to be worked on."

When the curtain rises a few working lights reveal Poliakoff's backcloth. While the musicians are tuning their instruments, dancers in practice costumes come up from the orchestra pit to take their places on stage. *Pas de deux,* groups and diagonal patterns of dancers follow each other.

The work is composed in a style which has been successful in England and America. But with the exception of some rather debatable movements—some unexpected "lifts" among others—the ballet does not revive interest in this type of work, nor equal or even come near Jerome Robbins's *Pied Piper* or Festival Ballet's *Symphony for Fun.* Furthermore, none of the dancers was perfectly convincing.

Marius Constant's score does not rank among his best: it lacks tunefulness and the necessary bite.

La Rose des Vents

Ballet by Roland Petit. Scenario by Albert Vidalie. Music by Darius Milhaud. Décors and costumes by Bazarte.

Cast

The Barmaid ..... RENEE JEANMAIRE
The Sailor ..... ROLAND PETIT
With RINO ADIPIETRO and
corps de ballet.

IN this very poetic scenario by Albert Vidalie, Roland Petit has found a more fruitful source of inspiration than the *Larousse Dictionary.* Once again he has the same good material as when he borrowed *Carmen* from Prosper Mérimée, used Anouilh for *Le Loup,* Simenon for *La Chambre,* and Cocteau for *Le Jeune Homme et la Mort.* The theme in itself is in perfect harmony with the dance, being sufficiently mysterious and rich in contrasts. Better than Françoise Sagan, this particular novelist, Vidalie, has understood the possibilities of ballet. Here is the plot which he submits to the invention of the choreographer:

"There was once in a sad and misty old port a Barmaid, who, because of her troubles and sorrow had undoubtedly become a little mad, and because nobody ever took any notice of her she took it upon herself to believe quite genuinely that she was a Siren. There was also an enchanted Sailor, who, one evening of pleasure, allowed a siren to be tattooed on his chest. And as from that very day he could find no interest in ordinary women, he roamed the Seven Seas in search of an impossible love. Neither of them knew that the other existed. However, one night when his ship pulled in they met by a happy chance. The young girl then left her miserable life to become a legend. But . . . perhaps she was really a Siren? . . ."

On the quayside a tavern welcomes sailors and girls who are in quest of oblivion. The general activity and noise get progressively calmer. At last the lame Barmaid is left to her dreams between her percolator and brandy glasses. Suddenly the door swings open and a Sailor clad in black enters. Disdainful of everyone, he gradually comes to find behind her miserable grey silhouette the Siren of his thoughts.

Then as in a dream, the sordid décor flies away, and with this change accomplished the lovers, now together, dance a long *pas de deux* beside the quay. As expected, Roland Petit puts his best work into this, and certain of the movements appear to be directly inspired by the sea: feet beat the air as in swimming, arms cleave waves, and balances hover as if suspended in water. Then the Sailor lets the Siren slip into the sea; he picks up his few belongings and goes away.

The ending seems rather abrupt and deprives the work of further development.

LA ROSE DES VENTS: *Another picture of the* pas de deux *from the most successful of Petit's new creations which has Milhaud music and designs by Bazarte.*

LA DAME DANS LA LUNE *(below): Basing his final new work on the fantasies of that pioneer of early films — Méliès — Petit has imagined that a young man penetrates the Palace of the Moon and has a number of adventures. Below left, Dick Sanders, as the Young Man, in a* pas de deux *with Véronika Mlakar, as the Lady in the Moon. Below, right, the scene eventually changes to a typical French can-can with Roland Petit, as Valentin, surrounded by the girls.*

However, despite its qualities, *La Rose des Vents* as a whole does not equal the ballets listed earlier. Without doubt, Darius Milhaud's music must be considered responsible for the work's lack of complete success. Listening to it as a whole, it appears bitty and obvious rather than inspired. At root it lacks "breath": no ship could sail very far under these conditions. Nevertheless, that of Petit flies the excellent décors of Bazarte, a Catalan painter with quiet suggestive colours.

Jeanmaire brings expression and her well-known charm to the enigmatic rôle of the Barmaid-Siren. Wan, tarnished and plaintive, her performance is a triumph of grace and freshness. With her Petit dances and acts his part with a most agreeable conviction, and he is particularly pleasing during the long *adage*.

La Dame dans la Lune

Ballet by Roland Petit. Music by Jean Françaix. Décors and costumes by Edouard Dermite.

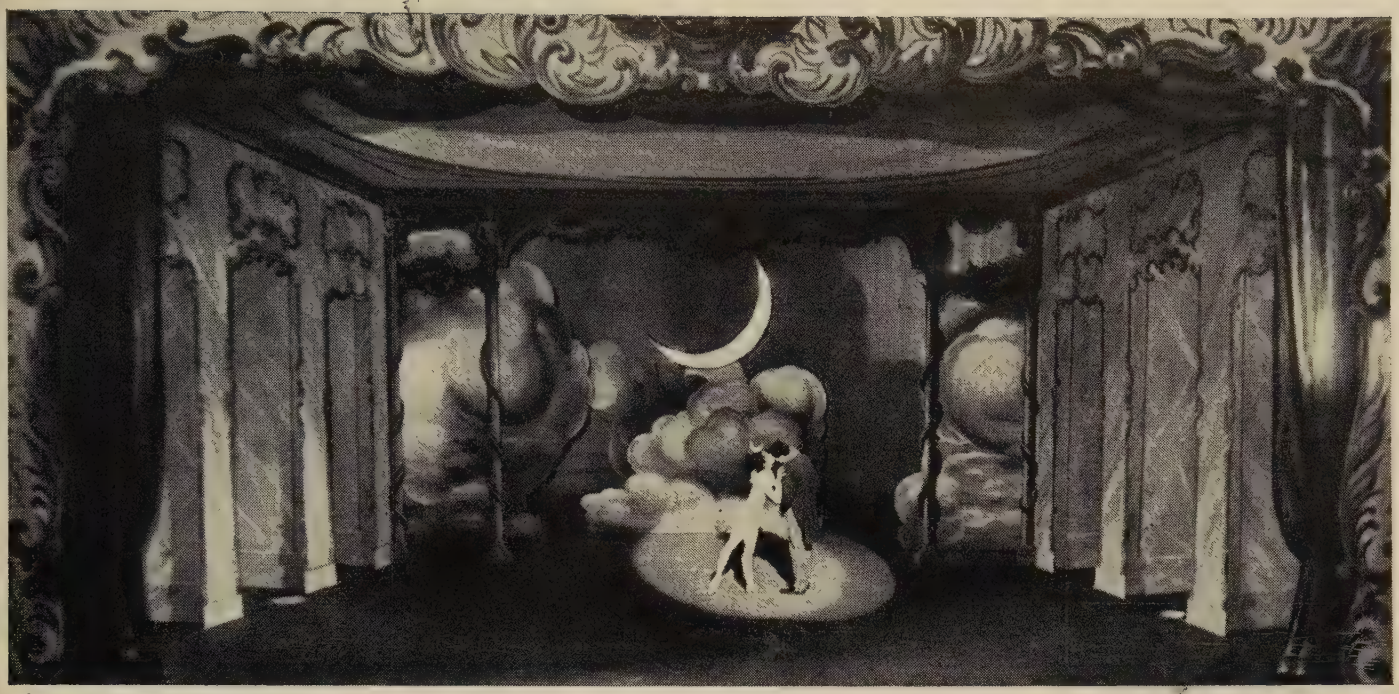
Cast

The Young Man ..... DICK SANDERS
The Woman ..... VERONIKA MLAKAR
The Magician ..... JOSE FERRAN
and *corps de ballet.*

PRODUCED as a tribute to the cinema pioneer, Méliès, this little work, which is very pleasant and unpretentious, is made up of a series of comical and delicate scenes. Young and naïve, Dick Sanders enters the Palace of Illusions, which has been designed with wit and invention by Dermite. To his dazzled eyes, Véronika Mlakar, mysterious in her paleness, descends on a crescent moon to link together the various fantastic scenes.

These range from characters taken from the Italian comedy to the Can-Can, in addition to the traditional ballet of butterflies. José Ferran, Rino Adipietro and Jane Laoust support the principals in the *divertissements*, where Roland Petit has successfully cast himself as a Can-Can dancer.

The ballet revels in a very pleasant score by Jean Françaix. Its gay rhythms are in perfect harmony with Dermite's décors.



IN THE PALACE OF THE MOON: Another picture of Mlakar and Sanders. The picture shows Edouard Dermite's permanent setting. He is the adopted son of Jean Cocteau.

Carmen

Ballet in five scenes. Scenario by Roland Petit based on Meilhac and Halévy's adaptation of Prosper Merimée's novel. Music by Georges Bizet. Choreography by Roland Petit. Designs by Antoni Clavé.

Cast

Carmen ..... ZIZI JEANMAIRE
Don José ..... ROLAND PETIT
Toreador ..... DICK SANDERS

AS I have said previously, it was the final ballet of the evening, *Carmen,* which was the real triumph.

It is remarkable how this ballet, first given in London in 1949, retains its power. In addition to the magnificent designing of Clavé, it has been Jeanmaire who has given the work its main impact. In recent years she has devoted most of her time to revues, films and music hall appearances, in which she sang a number of songs with a rare mastery of this difficult technique. As in the previous ballet, *La Rose des Vents,* she once again revealed that her unique talent as a dancer has been restored and Carmen with all her dusty passion is back with us again. Passion and spirit was also shown by Roland Petit, as Don José, though the rôle calls for little more than the forceful personality which he unquestionably has.

The rôle of the Toreador, who attracts Carmen's attentions in the final scene, was originally given an unforgettable portrayal by Serge Perrault. This is now played by the charming Dick Sanders, who somehow seems rather insignificant and something of a caricature in the rôle.

BUTTERFLY BALLET: Another of the charming scenes inspired by Méliès' films which made one of the most attractive features of the whole ballet.

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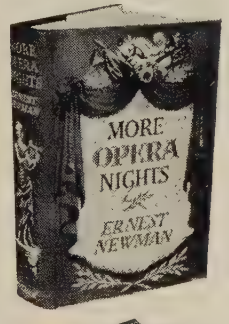

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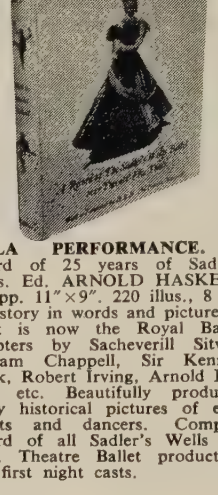

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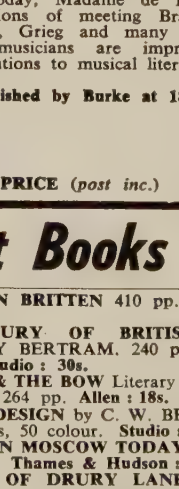

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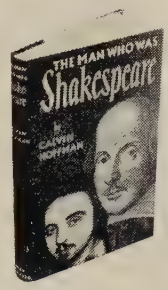

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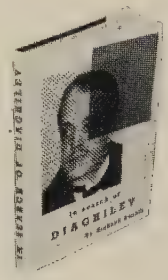

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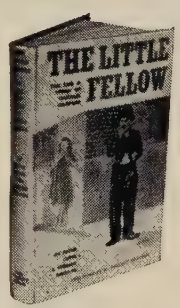

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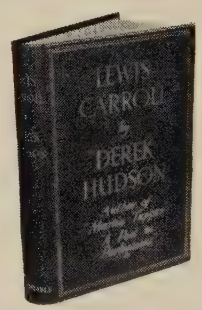

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IN ROMANTIC SWITZERLAND: Two pictures of Alicia Markova and Borge Ralov in the ballet from Act 3 of Rossini's William Tell, *for which Markova herself arranged the choreography. This ballet was the great hit of the opera.*

Photos: Douglas Elston

Markova among the Singers

THE very idea of great ballerinas appearing in opera has become so alien to the British ballet public that the announcement of Markova's performances in two operas at Drury Lane — *William Tell* and *The Pearl Fishers* — was originally greeted with curious anticipation by the average ballet person. "Will she dance with an apple on her head?" or "Is she going to do an underwater ballet?" were the most general questions asked.

All of which proves how far ballet has broken away from the art which originally succoured it. Ninety years ago nobody, even in jest, would have made such remarks because ballet was then an integral part of opera and the fact that one of the world's great ballerinas was appearing in a Rossini or Bizet opera would have been taken for granted and no subject for surprised comment.

A few years ago Dame Ninette de Valois, in one of those penetratingly shrewd speeches she is so apt to make, remarked that the public is a fickle thing — should a great singer arise then it would possibly leave ballet and turn its attention to opera again. Today a lot of great singers have arisen and their popularity has been greatly increased by the magnificent records which are within the reach of anyone with enough money to buy a gramophone. The public, true to Dame Ninette's prediction, is turning increasingly to operatic performances, particularly those which include international names.

All her professional life Markova has been a pioneer — she danced the full-length classics when there was no other British ballerina to attempt them, she was the first of our ballerinas to get in on television, her whole career is dotted with occasions when she was the first to do something, though it has remained for others to reap the full benefit.

It may merely be a fanciful idea but I have a shrewd suspicion that Markova was fully aware of the public's new turn of affection when she undertook to appear in operas at the Met in New York. Anyway her dancing in the recent production of Gluck's *Orpheus* there brought her as great an accolade from the critics and public as any she has received in many triumphal years before the New York public.

Rossini's *Guglielmo Tell* had not been seen in London between 1911 and February 28 1958, and if the production given at Drury Lane is a faithful one, I can well understand the reason. It is a mighty ponderous work which is occasionally lit up by passages of typical Rossini brilliance. However, all the honours of the evening went to the ballet in Act 3.

Even if the opera has not been seen in London for 47 years, the ballet music is well-known enough. It is played incessantly in light orchestral programmes and most of it has been used in other ballets — notably by Walter Gore in his *Plaisance* for Ballet Rambert and by Andrée Howard and myself in *Selina* for the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet. Considering Rossini wrote this music into the opera as a vehicle for Marie Taglioni, no ballerina of our time could be more suitable to recreate it than Alicia Markova. She did a good deal of research — studying documents and prints — in order to evoke the style of the great romantic ballerina of the last century. Whether the result was brought about by this research or by Markova's inherent instinct for the style and mood of true romanticism I just would not know. Whatever it was this third-act divertissement gave me more pleasure than any dancing I have seen since Markova danced in London last year, and judging by her reception the audience apparently felt the same way about it.

Partnered by that fine star of the Royal Danish Ballet, Borge Ralov, Markova danced with a joy and delicious gaiety that could be achieved by no other ballerina of our time. There was no sense of strain, her smile was never forced but seemed to come naturally from her pleasure in dancing. The delicacy of the positions of her head, arms and hands never gave any feeling of burlesque. Her speed, her elevation and the perfection of her turns were accomplished as though they were as easy as walking out of a door.

Here was the perfect example of what Pavlova meant when she said that ballerinas should perfect their technique and then forget about it. As I watched Markova I could not help thinking what it would look like if performed by those queens of technique we see about these days. How they would strain to impress the audience with that "look what I can do" expression as they finished a *grand manège* and a series of *pirouettes* and, worse than all, that amused "how funny these old ballerinas must have been" look as they grotesquely imitated what they believed to be the mannerisms of the last century!

Markova wears the mantle of the Romantic ballet as naturally as she wears her own dress so exquisitely made by Manya. How right she was to choose Ralov, with his Bournonville tradition behind him, to accompany her on these enchanting junketings by a Swiss lake! If for this ballet alone, plus the playing of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the revival of Rossini's patriotic opera was worth everything.

The dancing in Bizet's *I Pescatori di Perle* presents a problem. Set in ancient Ceylon, the choreographer has either to attempt a genuine reconstruction of Cingalese dances or else achieve a Romantic stylisation in the manner of the period of the opera's creation — the early eighteen-sixties. This approach is dictated by the whole style of the production. The production which was shown at Drury Lane on March 12 was, to say the least, a strange hotch-potch. The scenery was charmingly Edwardian, the costumes could have come from the wardrobe of *Chu Chin Chow* or any Oriental or Arabian fantasy you like to think of. None of which had much to do with "ancient Ceylon". Markova, like the opera's heroine Leila, was supposed to be a priestess, but they don't have priestesses in Ceylon — they never did. But they do have temple dancers, therefore it was as this person that Markova saw herself in the dance she arranged in the beginning of the last scene of the opera.

Had the production been stylised to any particular period then it would have been possible for her to appear in an Orientalised Romantic tutu and dance on point but as things were this would have merely looked absurd. Her only alternative was to do something which looked as genuinely Oriental as the rest of the production. In a plum and gald costume, somewhat resembling that worn by Pavlova for her *Ajanta Frescoes,* she was first seen standing on a high rock, before the temple, as the curtain rose. Descending slowly, her arms in front of her with her finger-tips touching, she made a most impressive entrance. Reaching stage-level she embarked on a dance which seemed to lie somewhere between the Kathak and Manipuri schools of Indian dancing. She turned and undulated and some of the movements and the compositions of her arms and body were exceedingly beautiful.

Frankly I think that Markova did all that could have been done under such circumstances and what she did was immaculate and given with the sense of style that is inseparable from all her work in the theatre. Had Pavlova been called upon to do the same kind of thing, I am pretty certain that she would have been just like Markova but since the days when Pavlova danced her Oriental numbers the occidental critics and public have come to learn a great deal about this kind of dancing.

In both these operas it was a great pleasure to see Markova doing something that she could never do in the average run-of-the-mill ballet repertory. It was unfortunate that the rest of the choreography in both operas, accredited to one Gianna Ciampaglia, was so completely undistinguished and banal as to do the whole cause of ballet in opera the gravest disservice.

P. W.

HELPMANN'S RETURN

Continued from page 13

slashing, bottle-smashing blood bath of the ballet's penultimate sequence, find praise for the ballet's courage and sincerity. As these are qualities I cannot discern in the production I must leave their analysis to those who can—all I can see are "frank, startling disclosures" of the most sensationalist variety.

One thing that can be said in the ballet's favour is the praiseworthy unity of the work's general conception. Helpmann's choreography is admirably matched by tuneful but somewhat commonplace music by Sir Arthur Bliss, which succeeds in capturing so much of Elgar's pomp and so little of his circumstance. That fine painter Edward Burra, who in an impressive frontcloth makes what is to my mind the work's foremost claim on posterity, then produces a superbly glossy tenement slum that is as slick as anything in the whole ballet. Like the choreography that has been slightly amended to include jive passages in place of yesterday's jitterbug, the costumes have also been given a contemporary angling by the substitution of a few leather-jerkins and jeans for the then current spiv finery of 1944.

Helpmann's own performance as the Stranger is disarmingly simple—he displays sainthood, or more, merely by walking slowly. Anyone could play the part; anyone that is with Helpmann's quality of stage magnetism and ability to make the static positive, which probably narrows the field down to himself, Massine, and perhaps Hugh Laing.

The characters in *Miracle in the Gorbals* demand an interpretation that is for the most part far removed from genuine balletic acting. In ballet—or at least in ballet as it is still generally understood—the acting should be fused with the dancing, and the portrayal emerges from the choreography. In Helpmann's work the choreography is negligible, having been reduced to organised stage-movement; the characterisation consequently has to be imposed on the rôles from without.

John Hart as the priestly Official gave an effective performance, as did Julia Farron as the Prostitute. Both rôles are conceived along such conventional lines that their playing could never be more than two-dimensional; the opportunities for acting offered by, say, the part of Caroline in Tudor's *Jardin aux Lilas* are almost completely missing. Both were far from newcomers to the rôles, but neither quite effaced the memory of the parts' creators. David Paltenghi used to smoulder so handsomely as the Official, and with Celia Franca the Magdalene-transformation seemed far more effective than with Farron. Ray Powell, another old hand of the ballet, brought a viciousness to the delinquency of the Juvenile, however, which that part's creator, Gordon Hamilton, never equalled, and Leslie Edwards as the dustbin-haunting Beggar underplayed beautifully.

Chief among the newcomers was Annette Page as the Suicide. This part, which actually contains a little dancing, was in the first instance intended for Margot Fonteyn, and what she might have been like in it is to some extent conveyed by this present touching interpretation by Page. Less frantic than Pauline Clayden, her predecessor, she gave a sensitive impression of helpless immaturity. Immaturity, far from helpless and much more confident, was also displayed by the two Young Lovers, discreetly danced by Brenda Taylor and young Richard Farley, in his first solo rôle.

C.B.

HAMLET

IF the great works of literature have to be turned into ballets, then Helpmann's conception of Shakespeare's *Hamlet,* as it was first given in 1942, could hardly have been bettered. It was not a literal translation but a phantasmagoria of the tragedy's situations as seen in the mind of the dying Prince. The relationship of the principal characters was established then became confused in a surrealistic nightmare. This drama in high places was well-knit in the A-B-A construction which ended, as it had begun, with Hamlet's dead body being borne off by pall-bearers. Even if some of the references were occasionally a bit obscure in the choreography, Leslie Hurry's Blake-like designs heightened the sense of doom and everything added up to splendid theatre.

That was sixteen years ago and though, apart from the addition of Court Gentlemen and a blown-up and elaborated set, the work has not changed to any great extent, we the audience have. We have become very choreography conscious. Just how much so was only too apparent in the general reaction to the revival at the Royal Ballet's annual gala on March 27. Today the work has become a ponderous and empty thing and so many of Helpmann's once startling effects have become superficial. I found myself longing for the depth of intelligence and movement conscience of a Martha Graham. The work has become a meaningless gabble of automatic choreographic utterances and frankly I don't think the company can be blamed for what has happened; time, in this case, has been the villain.

Not unnaturally much hinges on the performance of the work's principal character, and Helpmann has lost his hypnotic power of dominating the scene and making the spectator enter into his mind — he is now a part of the general action and no longer apart from it. The muted smouldering that he once brought to his portrayal of the gloomy Dane is no longer even a dying ember, and his performance never once ignited. Though this again, as with his other performances, may possibly have sparked-up again with greater acquaintance with his own ballet.

Fay Compton was the first Ophelia I ever saw and Anya Linden's likeness to her in this part was almost uncanny. She was so immensely touching and trusting that her eventual madness became a very real thing. Although Fonteyn in this rôle is unforgettable, I found that Linden in a more debutantish way was equally effective. Julia Farron made a powerful and imperiously evil Gertrude, while Franklin White was a weak and doddering Polonius and Leslie Edwards brought spectral dignity to the Ghost of Hamlet's father. But the main horror of this saga in high places was conveyed by Ray Powell's Gravedigger. Like an angry dwarf jester at the court of Peter the Great, he bowls Yorick's skull through the preponderance of tragic happenings. If all the rôles were as well-rounded as this, what a much better ballet it would have been! David Blair as Laertes was just like David Blair playing Laertes rather than a true son of Polonius.

The promotion of that gigantic menacing figure from the backcloth of Hurry's set to a place of its own was not an improvement. It was as though the Danish Royal family had suddenly taken a liking for those lumps of statuary which now adorn our public buildings rather than the symbol of portent and doom that it so graphically used to suggest in its old position. But neither the setting nor the costumes startle with their daring use of colour as of old. Years of looking at Clavé and other designers working for French ballet have blunted our reaction to this form of shock-tactic designing. Today it seems rather tame and Hurry himself has matured enormously since this his first ballet burst upon us.

Tchaikovsky never wrote a less rewarding piece of music than this symphonic poem, though that may only be a personal opinion and I have a hero-worship for most of what he composed.

P. W.

MARKOVA GOES TO THE PALACE: Alicia Markova (right) with two of the four Marks sisters — Doris and Vivienne — leaving for Buckingham Palace on March 11. Markova was going to the investiture to receive from the Queen the C.B.E. she was awarded in the New Year's Honours. A few nights previously Markova was invited to a private dinner party at the Palace. Photo: P-A. Reuter.

curtain up!

The Queen Mother swaps boxes

THE Queen Mother and Princess Margaret are most faithful patrons of the ballet and, apart from other performances which they attend, they are welcome regulars at the Royal Ballet's annual gala in aid of the Royal Ballet Benevolent Fund. They were at Covent Garden, as usual, for this annual occasion on March 27.

Despite the fact that there was the now usual temporary box erected in the middle of the Grand Tier, the Queen Mother only sat in it for two out of the four ballets. Although it is known that she prefers to see the ballet from this advantageous position, she nevertheless moved to the old Royal Box, on the prompt side of the theatre, for part of the performance. This was not, as has been reported, so that she could see the ballets from a closer seat but so that some of the audience, particularly the gallery, could see her. Looking radiant as usual, and a little sunburnt from her recent Australian trip, she and her daughter led the applause—not with just polite little claps but good hearty stuff.

In the second interval some members of the organisation were presented to the Royal couple. Princess Margaret greeted Kenneth MacMillan as an old friend (remember she went twice to see *The Burrow*) and the Queen Mother also showed great interest in his work. She astounded everyone by wishing him good luck for his forthcoming production of Stravinsky's *Agon* at La Scala, Milan.

Magic needed in Bow Street

"NOW let us have a new Stage Manager," shouted somebody from the upper reaches of Covent Garden as the curtain fell on the first act of Fonteyn's *Sleeping Beauty* on March 10, and a great deal of derisive laughter came from many other parts of the house. From the stage management point of view there had been an almost incredible number of catastrophes. The lighting throughout had been dim beyond words and Carabosse descended in complete darkness. Then Beriosova as the Lilac Fairy came on and tried to make the magic forest grow but not even her magical powers could make these trees shift. To add to the confusion a descending gauze got caught in the scenery and the trees at the back, which should grow under her touch, refused to budge. In the final scene when Leslie Edwards as Cattalabutte arrives to usher in the renaissance court, he entered in a dim orange glow which got a little brighter for the first *entrée* of courtiers and fairy tale characters. Eventually the stage did achieve some sort of illumination but it was an ill-lit court on the whole.

These things are never excusable in the professional theatre, but in a place like the Royal Opera House they are quite disgraceful. People paying the greatly increased prices for their seats expect to have perfection.

1,000-dollars-per-minute males

IT is doubtful whether those four famous ballerinas of the last century—Taglioni, Grisi, Elssler and Grahn—were paid anything approaching what London Festival Ballet's male *pas de quatre* were paid for their Ed Sullivan TV programme on March 30 in New York.

After the season in Glasgow, Festival Ballet's John Gilpin, Louis Godfrey, Michael Hogan and André Prokovsky, together with Anton Dolin, flew to America to take part in an eleven-minute ballet for which 11,000 dollars was paid. This ballet, Dolin's *Variations for Four*, was first given at the Festival Ballet Birthday Gala at Festival Hall on September 7 last year.

Hair let down

JOHN CRANKO made some revealing comments, quoted in the *News Chronicle* after his musical, *Keep Your Hair On*, closed after a fourteen-day run. He is reported as having said, "I hate ballet. In this country it's run like a Civil Service. It's a hundred years out of date. They expect you to sit on your behind at the Wells for £14 a week and turn out masterpieces every year. But I'll have to go back to it—for a while, I suppose."

If the masterpieces *were* turned out every year, I feel there might be rather more justification for these remarks.

Did she leave or not?

THE Australian Borovansky Ballet has just finished a long season and there are rumours that the company has finished also. But these are rumours I have heard for years and still Borovansky manages to keep it rolling. What is certain, however, is that Elaine Fifield has returned to England. It seems more than likely, at the time of writing, that she may join Royal Ballet (II) as one of its ballerinas. Now I come to think of it, the Royal Ballet never actually announced that she had left, so that it will hardly constitute a return, will it?

If these rumours about Fifield are true then there is every possibility that she will be back again in Australia before the end of the year—this time with a British company. Negotiations are going ahead for a visit of Royal Ballet (II) to Australia in the early autumn. If these materialise the company will fly out in September and tour Australia for eight months.

Everything happens to Rambert

THE history of Britain's oldest company is unhappily punctuated by the departure of dancers who Rambert has groomed to stardom. Recently I told you about Patricia Dyer leaving to go and teach in Perth, Australia. Now another Patricia, Ashworth this time, is leaving because she is expecting a baby. She is married to the choreographer and former Rambert dancer, Ronald Yerrell.

As if this were not enough, the young male dancer Ian Metsis, a Greek citizen, has been unable to get his work permit renewed. Metsis had become one of the most promising of Rambert's young male dancers.

Diaghilev stars in another field

THERE are two stars of the Diaghilev ballet who live in England though they have not been much in the public eye lately —Lydia Sokolova and Stanislas Idzikowsky. Recently, however, Sokolova was responsible for the movement in the BBC television production of the famous Chinese play—*The Circle of Chalk*. It seems absurd, though, that more is not made of the presence of this fine artist. Few dancers ever possessed a wider range.

Some years ago we published a picture of one of the exquisite model rooms made by Idzikowsky. He is a master craftsman at making wooden models of all kinds. Recently his models were exhibited by the Royal Academy of Dancing and the exhibition was opened by Dame Margot Fonteyn.

Accent on Modern Dance

MODERN dance has been rather neglected in Britain of late, so I am always glad to hear of companies and groups who are starting up. In April the

John Broome Dance Theatre gives some performances at the Park Lane Theatre. The work of this group is based on the Jooss-Leeder method but with an individual approach which claims to aim at a more subtle form of dance expression.

The first programme consists of works by John Broome and Yvonne Cox to the music of composers as varied as Schubert, Purcell, Handel, Telemann, Pergolesi and a work with a score specially commissioned from Yvonne Cox.

I am also glad to hear that Contemporary Dance Theatre plan to give further monthly programmes starting in September. This group is extending its activities to include dancers of all kinds who wish to develop and show a deeper side to their work. As well as performances, the group plans to give lectures, demonstrations and recitals as well as a choreographic competition. Everyone interested should write to the Secretary, Contemporary Dance Theatre, St. Bride's Institute, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4.

Is this fair?

SOME months ago I complained about the fact that the Royal Academy of Dancing was not exempt from paying rates as it was not considered to be a fine art. My contention was that if dancing was not a fine art, then what was?

Now I have had an answer to this question. Apparently the Institution of Mechanical Engineers is considered to be an institution fostering the fine arts. Recently they were exempted from paying rates by a decision of the Lands Tribunal. They had appealed against a decision of the Central London Local Valuation Court which had rejected their contention that as a scientific society under the Literary and Scientific Societies Act of 1883, they were exempt from liability for rates. After the Mechanical Engineers' Institution had won their appeal, the Valuation Officer and the Westminster City Council were each ordered to pay half the Institution's costs.

Honour satisfied

DURING the opening night of the Paris season of the Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas at the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, attention was drawn from the stage to the auditorium on account of an incident. It was reported that Lifar publicly objected to the showing of his own ballet—*Noir et Blanc*—at this performance. During the interval, the Marquis de Cuevas objected to Lifar's objections, with the result that Lifar threw down his handkerchief in place, no doubt, of the gauntlet that he was perhaps unlikely to be wearing in the theatre. A duel had to be fought, honour had to be satisfied. After a great deal of pother, swords were fixed on as the weapons.

This was splendid for Lifar, after all he has had sword duels in many of his ballets, so presumably he knew how to handle one, but he was worried about the Marquis. "You never know with a beginner," Lifar was reported as having said. "If he lashes out I might get hit in the eye." The Marquis himself was worried. "I don't want to fight. I don't want to kill and nobody wants to kill me. I don't know how to handle a sword."

The world waited with baited breath for this event, and while they waited the Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas season had publicity that gathered momentum almost to the proportions of the Sagan ballet.

After a good deal of delay because the weather was not good enough for the 73-year-old Marquis to be exposed to the chill morning air, the two veterans engaged in battle at an estate 50 miles from Paris on March 30.

With his epée held straight in front of him, the Marquis met the whirling onslaught of Lifar. Between rounds one and two, the doctors listened to the heart of the Marquis to see whether it was still beating. It was. Eventually in round three, the Marquis managed to inflict an inch-long scratch on Lifar's forearm. Honour, it seemed, was satisfied, so the contestants embraced fondly, the Marquis wept, and all was forgiven.

Well, they may have forgiven each other but the world of ballet does not forgive two people in responsible positions making such a ludicrous spectacle of themselves. One can only hope they have gained publicity that will be of assistance to them in their future careers.

Ambassador's lady no more

MOST people have mixed feelings about the fact that owing to Dr. Roberto Arias's resignation as Panamanian Ambassador to the Court of St. James ballerina Dame Margot Fonteyn is no longer an Ambassador's wife. I think that everyone has been worried that this dual rôle might become too much for her, and the fact that her first *Giselle* this season had to be cancelled owing to a Guildhall banquet was certain proof of this fear. On the other hand everyone sympathises with her for the fact that Dr. Arias's decision to return to Panama for part of the year means that Dame Margot will be separated for long stretches of time from her husband, to whom she is devoted. She has announced her intention of fulfilling her commitments to the Royal Ballet, and knowing her strong sense of duty it is certain that she will not go back on her word. Her untold number of admirers will extend all their sympathy to a beloved ballerina who found great happiness in her marriage only to find herself, as she must today, in an unfortunate predicament.

happy birthday to...

		May
Ann Horn	Ballet Rambert	24
Margaret Lee	Royal Ballet	26
Cecil Bates	Teaching in Australia	26
Leon Ward	London's Festival Ballet	28
Pamela May	Royal Ballet	30
Nadine Revene	American Ballet Theatre	30
Geoffrey Webb	The Windmill Theatre	31
		June
Rosemary Lindsay	Royal Ballet	2
Mary Duchesne	London's Festival Ballet	2
Molly Lake	Teaching in Turkey	3
Natalie Krassovska	London's Festival Ballet	3
Nina Vyroubova	De Cuevas Grand Ballet	4
Robert Harrold	Teaching	4
Gillian Martlew	Ballet Rambert	5
Peter Bosman	Royal Ballet	5
June Sandbrook	Ballet Rambert	5
Arlette Castanier	De Cuevas Grand Ballet	6
Derek Rencher	Royal Ballet	6
Ninette de Valois	Royal Ballet Organisation	6
George Zoritch	Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo	6
Sandra Vane	Covent Garden Opera Ballet	6
Gloria Bonnell	Canadian National Ballet	7
Patricia Ashworth	Ballet Rambert	8
Nansi Clement	American Ballet Theatre	10
Keith Beckett	London's Festival Ballet	11
Beryl Grey		11
Olwen Hought	Ballet Rambert	11
Marlene Rizzo	De Cuevac Grand Ballet	12
Christine du Boulay	Teaching in Chicago	12
June Greenhalgh	London's Festival Ballet	12
Sheila Wright	London's Festival Ballet	12
Joan Potter	Borovansky Ballet	12
Jeanette Minty	London's Festival Ballet	13
Sharon Enoch	American Ballet Theatre	14
Frank Staff	In South Africa	15
Scott Douglas	American Ballet Theatre	16
Desmond Doyle	Royal Ballet	16
Toni Lander	*Le Rendez-vous Manqué*	19
Michael Hogan	London's Festival Ballet	19
Sonia Arova	Chicago Opera Ballet	20
Thelma Litster	Ballet Rambert	22
Elsa Recagno	Ballet Rambert	22
Debra Wayne	Royal Ballet	22
John Chesworth	Ballet Rambert	22

Dancer of Today

As the Showman in Petrushka.
Photo : Bill McGee.

FRANKLIN WHITE

Born in Shoreham, Kent, in 1924. Started to dance at the age of 9, studying first at the Rambert School, and later with Peggy Van Praagh and Anna Severskaya. He joined the Ballet Rambert in 1939, and joined the Royal Ballet in 1942. He has remained with the Royal Ballet ever since and is now a senior male soloist.
Creations include: Father in Cinderella; *Father in* Madame Chrysanthème; *Police Chief in* Mam'zelle Angot; *Mandarin in* Clock Symphony; *Rôles include: Hilarion in* Giselle; *Dr. Coppelius, etc., in* Coppèlia; *Gallison, etc., in* The Sleeping Beauty; *Wolfgang in* Swan Lake; *Kostchei in* The Firebird; *The Showman in* Petrushka; *The Corregidor in* The Three-Cornered Hat; *Tailor in* The Rake's Progress; *Noverre in* The Prospect Before Us; *Popular Song in* Façade; *John in* A Wedding Bouquet; *Polonius in* Hamlet; *Reporter in* Bonne-Bouche.

IT is a sad comment on our national ballet that Franklin White, although still in his early thirties, is among the company's oldest inhabitants. The breadth of experience and maturity of outlook brought to ballet by the older dancer is very much lacking at Covent Garden. It is significant in this connection that it is only in the past couple of years or so that Franklin White has attained his full usefulness with the company.

His versatility as character dancer and mime has always been valuable, but not so long ago his characterisations were marred by an accumulation of detail that detracted from their power of projection. Recently, however, his performances in *The Firebird* and *Petrushka* have shown a completely new simplicity and understanding, which is now making itself felt throughout the very wide range of rôles in his repertoire.

STEPS OF THE DANCE 29

by

BARBARA VERNON and JOHN GREGORY

Illustrated by EILEAN PEARCEY

CENTRE-WORK : ALLEGRO

Introduction

THE *Allegro* manifests the real spirit and *joie de vivre* of the class. It is pure dance and it should be pure joy. *Allegro* is like rippling water, the wind in the trees, or the flight of a bird; it is free, spirited, vivacious; it has lightness, speed and brilliance. But that seemingly spontaneous facility which is the essence of this lively sprite is not so easily acquired.

In *Allegro* there are many mysteries to unravel. How may that lithe push from the floor be attained? How that resilient twist and turn? How may those brittle beats be accomplished? How such agile feats of dexterity? But above all that alluring quality which goes under the name of *ballon*; the effortless spring and soft alighting from a jump.

The dancer approaches *Allegro* with his body tuned and ready. He is, in some measure, master of his instrument. At this stage of the class the half-trained student, if he has the right spirit, feels a glow of enthusiasm that impels him further, and attacks the *enchaînements* with ardour. But *Allegro* is fraught with hidden pitfalls; what looks so exciting, so plausible and easy is often bewildering to the unenlightened student.

We meet here the unexpected change of direction, a step going one way suddenly evolves into a step going the other; a hop becomes immersed in a turn, a turn emerges into a step of flight. In this full and complex chain of movement every part of the body must contribute harmoniously; every muscle must be controlled and disciplined. There are many devices for making difficult or complicated movements flow with a technical ease and fluency. A flick of the head, a slight inflection of one shoulder, a subtle inclination of the torso, the tensing of a muscle or the relaxing of a limb, the impetus of an arm or shoulder. The mechanics of the classical dance have many subtle shadings, the mastery of which can only be obtained by years of study and perseverance.

A talented dancer who has studied five years in this system will have surmounted many of the difficulties of moving with ease and power; all those intricate variations of *Allegro* will be within his grasp. With his mind and body trained and schooled, he feels himself a king among dancers. It is now the most natural thing in the world for him to dance with freedom and grace. He has acquired the scientific key to technical facility, and is able to fulfil himself as an artist.

But how can these secrets of anatomical manipulation ever be sufficiently explained by the written word? Even if I write and analyse until I am ninety-nine and catalogue my meanings in the most lucid language, I will not be able to impart to the student or the teacher a full grasp of the technical processes. Those who would possess themselves fully of the technique of the classical dance must go to the classroom where the routine of practice is followed daily.

All the same I shall endeavour to convey as much as possible in these writings, and with the help of drawings. I am ambitious to present the structure of the classical dance in a way that has not been done before; and to give to every particular step the key devices that offer the clue to many unfolding chains of beautiful movement.

The sections of the class previously described have all contributed to preparing the dancer's body to move with ease. The instep and leg muscles have been strengthened, the turn-out has been enforced; the placing of the body has been adjusted; the *plié* before every stretch has been well attended to; the cultivation of *épaulement* has been thoroughly considered; so that now, when the body attempts quick movements, each step will be made with correct form and aesthetic line.

The *Allegro* section of the Class is composed of two or three *enchaînements* of small jumping steps. These *enchaînements*, which usually consist of 2, 3 or 4 or more steps are set to various lively rhythms; sometimes in 4 or 6 counts, and very often in the unconventional phrasings of 5, 7 or 9 counts. The *enchaînement* is first performed at a moderate tempo, and later is quickened. First it is performed simply, and after beats may be added.

The *enchaînement* should be repeated in sequence not less than 4 times. There is never any pause or wait between the repeats; the sentence of dance continues uninterrupted so that a rhythmical flow is maintained throughout. Sometimes the *enchaînement* travels to the right and left; sometimes it is a combination that repeats the same way, travelling *en diagonal* or circularly around the studio.

Care should be taken not to turn the *Allegro* steps into big jumps; the quality of *Allegro* is essentially quick, light and spontaneous; nor should the *Allegro* steps be fettered to the spot, but should travel rather freely in whichever direction the movement indicates.

The *enchaînements* are composed of such steps as: *Glissade, Assemblé, Jeté, Pas de Bourrée, Pas de Bourrée courru, Tombé, Echappé, Changement de pied, Coupé, Ballonné, Failli, Pas de Basque, Pas de Chat, Emboité, Ballotté, Royale, Entrechat Trois, Entrechat Quatre, Entrechat Six, Brisé*, etc., etc.

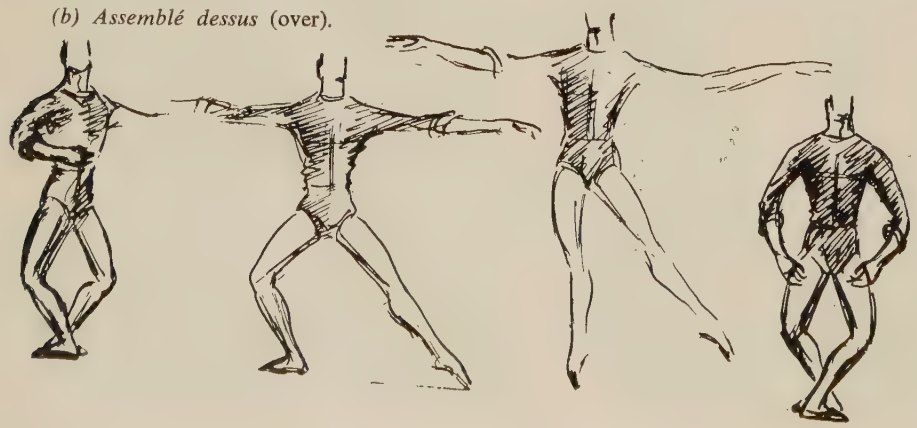
The first *enchaînement* is given very simply of one or two steps to warm the legs thoroughly; the second *enchaînement* may be used for speed and travelling; the third *enchaînement* for brilliance and *batterie. Pirouettes* may also be introduced into the *Allegro* exercises.

The next articles will discuss individually the numerous steps of *Allegro*, and will give examples of *enchaînements*, and drawings.

Illustration 48

(a) Glissade derrière.

(b) Assemblé dessus (over).



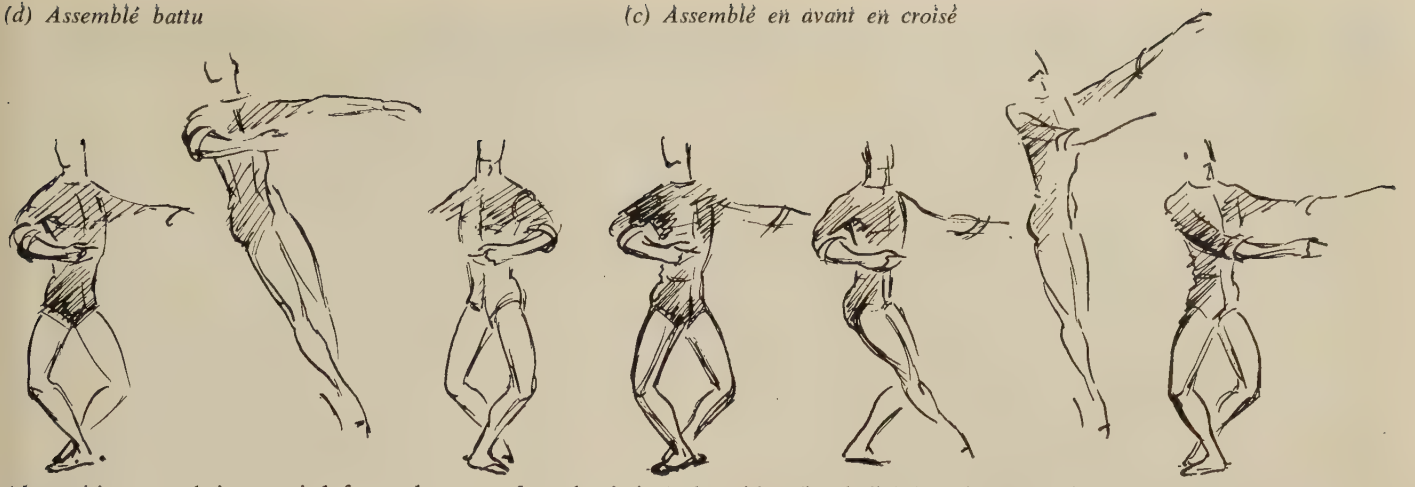
ARTICLE : 30

THE STEPS OF ALLEGRO

GLISSADE (see Article 19 where it is fully described): a *glissade*, as its name suggests, is a gliding movement, and is generally used to join one step with another. The gliding movement travels from *plié*, to stretch, to *plié*, and is close to the floor. From *plié* in 5th position (or 4th position) the working leg slides out to stretched extension; with a co-ordinated push from the supporting leg, weight is transferred to the extended leg; the other leg closing after it in 5th position (or sliding on to 4th position).

Glissade may travel in all directions, sideways, forwards, backwards, *en effacé* and *en croisé*, and circularly. To obtain the correct *épaulement* which contributes to ease of the movement and good style, it is important to remember that the arm corresponding to the forward leg is held rounded in the 2nd position, the other arm open to 4th position. If the relationship of the legs changes with the passage of the *glissade* the arms will change with them; the 2nd position arm opening out to 4th position, the

(d) Assemblé battu *(c) Assemblé en avant en croisé*



4th position arm being carried forward to 2nd position. The head also changes with the movement and is always slightly turned towards whichever shoulder is forward.

In *Allegro* the *glissade* is usually small and quick, but not jumped.

GLISSADE CIRCULAR: In which with 3 or 4 *glissades* a circular path is described; each *glissade* travelling approximately a quarter of a circle.

When performed with *glissade derriére* the body turns towards the supporting leg, with a slight inclination over the supporting leg. The arm corresponding to the working leg is open to 4th position, the other arm is in 2nd position. When the circular path is taken with *glissade devant* the body turns towards the working leg with a slight inclination of the body towards that leg. Arm corresponding to working leg in 2nd position; other arm in 4th position. In each case the head looks in the direction of travel.

PAS DE BOURREE (See Articles 16, 19, 20, and 22 for descriptions): Another linking step which is a combination of 3 small steps taken with alternate legs; the first two steps on *demie-pointe,* the third step *en plié.* The *Pas de Bourrée* over, under, *en tournant,* etc., are analysed in the articles listed above in the *Adage* section. Whether used in *Adage, Allegro,* or in *Grand Pas,* the principle of *Pas de Bourrée* remains the same; only the *tempi* and proportion of the execution varies.

ASSEMBLE: Is a jump from two legs in which one leg glides out to an extended position *en l'air.* Both legs while stretched in the air are brought together and land in 5th position *en plié. Assemblé* may be performed as a straight upwards jump, or it may travel in the direction of the working leg.

ASSEMBLE DESSUS (Over): From *plié* in 5th position the back leg slides out with a pressure into the floor to the 2nd position *en l'air*; simultaneously the supporting leg gives a strong push from the floor. In the air the working leg closes in front of the other leg before they return to the floor in 5th position *en plié.*

Commencing position of the arms: Arm corresponding to front leg in 2nd position; other arm in 4th position. With the jump the 2nd position arm opens to 4th position, and with the landing both arms are lowered to 1st position.

The head, which is slightly uplifted, also reflects the passage of the jump by turning slightly in the direction of the working leg.

ASSEMBLE DESSOUS (Under) The reverse movement of the foregoing. The front leg is the working leg, and after jump closes 5th position behind before landing in 5th position *en plié.* Arm corresponding to front leg is in 2nd position (head slightly turned in that direction); other arm in 4th position. With jump 2nd position arm opens to 4th position and with landing both arms are lowered to 1st position. Head turns slightly in direction of front leg.

ASSEMBLE EN AVANT EN CROISE: From 5th position *en croisé* the front leg slides straight out to the *croisé* position *en l'air* whilst the supporting leg sinks into *plié*; the supporting leg then pushes from the floor to make a vertical spring. In the air the working leg joins the supporting leg, and they land in 5th position *en plié.* This *assemblé* may be performed *sur place* or may travel forward in the *croisé* direction.

From 1st position arms float forwards and up in synchronisation with the jump; front arms to 2nd position, other arm to 4th position. When the *assemblé* is travelled the rear arm instead of opening to 4th position may be taken up to 3rd position; in this case the palms of both hands are facing downwards; the hands slightly raised.

ASSEMBLE EN TOURNANT EN DEDANS: This step is easier to execute if taken from a running *Pas de Bourrée*; arriving in 4th position *en plié* the working leg is brushed through 1st position forward *en l'air* as supporting leg pushes from the floor. The body revolves in the direction of the supporting leg to make one complete turn (or ¾ turn) in the air. Both legs come together in the air fully stretched beneath the body, and land in 5th position *en plié.*

Arm corresponding to the supporting leg is in 2nd position, the other arm in 4th position. With the jump impetus is gathered with the 4th position arm which is brought in to 2nd position; and both arms are lowered to 1st position.

ASSEMBLE BATTU: *Assemblé* with beat. In which the supporting leg is lifted from the jump to strike the working leg calf to calf whilst in the air. The beat is made while the legs have the same relationship from which they start. That is to say — the same 5th position from which they began. After the beat the back leg is brought in front, and they land in 5th position *en plié.*

Note: I have described *Glissade* and *Assemblé* starting from 5th position. which is the academic basis and must be thoroughly learned; but in *Allegro* more speed and flow of movement may be obtained by starting these steps from 4th position.

EXAMPLES OF ALLEGRO ENCHAINEMENTS INCORPORATING ASSEMBLE:

	Counts
(1) *Glissade derriére*	And 1
Assemblé dessus	„ 2
Pas de Bourrée dessous	„ 3
Assemblé dessus	„ 4
Repeat on other side	
(2) *Glissade derriére*	„ 1
Pas de Bourrée dessous	„ 2
Assemblé dessus	„ 3
Assemblé dessus	„ 4
Repeat on other side	
(3) *Glissade devant*	„ 1
Assemblé dessous	„ 2
Assemblé en avant en croisé	„ 3
Repeat on other side	
Travelling *en diagonal.*	
(4) *Glissade dessus*	„ 1
Glissade dessous	„ 2
Pas de Bourrée en tournant en dehors	„ 3
Pas de Bourrée en tournant en dedans	„ 4
Assemblé dessous battu	„ 5
Repeat same way as many times as studio space will permit.	

The above *enchaînements* start from 5th position.

Schools and Clubs

PATRICIA SPALDING has recently converted the theatre, previously known as the Chepstow Theatre, near Notting Hill Gate, London, into a new ballet studio where she will give her classes.

THE International Folk Dance Society recently combined the work of three schools in the Festival of Movement and Dance at Wembley on March 15. These were the Margaret Morris School, the Laban Art of Movement Centre and the Cecchetti Society (Nesta Brooking choreographing for the occasion).

THE Lewisham Ballet Club and Maria Zybina's School of Russian Ballet joined forces to present a programme at Penge on March 8.

Although it must be said that *Pictures in an Exhibition* was too ambitious for the extremely limited stage facilities, Madame Zybina's choreography was interesting and original enough to make it worth seeing. By using adults and more experienced dancers with students she managed to assemble a more balanced and varied programme than is usually seen in recitals of this type.

Moreover the *divertissements* and folk-dances were so arranged as to be well within the range of her dancer's techniques. Jill Olrod, Margaret Childs, Delia Lindon, Mariangela Polich, Linda Neech, June Garland and Ian Ross all gave good performances.

Mainly Fonteyniana

NEW BOOKS

Fonteyn, A Study of the Ballerina in her Setting, by James Monahan. (A. & C. Black, 18*s.*)

Margot Fonteyn, A Biography, by Elizabeth Frank. (Chatto & Windus, 21*s.*)

ONE of the least satisfactory forms of literature is the biography of a living person still in the full flush of a successful career. Such books can never amount to more than an interim report because there is so much that cannot be said—either because it has not happened or for diplomatic reasons—until, in the case of a ballerina, the last step has been danced. That is why a profile in something ephemeral like a newspaper or magazine is often of far more value. It never pretends to be more than an up-to-the-minute assessment, and the life is thus spared that mausoleum-like permanence which a couple of boards and a glossy jacket invariably suggest.

In this respect, I would say that the profiles in the *New Yorker* provide the perfect models for this form of literature. With wit and brilliance they make the characters concerned spring to life by combining an assessment of the career with a lively sprinkling of anecdotal material. For the profile writer, these two books on Margot Fonteyn would, combined, supply all that is needed for a *New Yorker*-length article. The serious study of the Monahan volume and the gossipy nature of the Frank one, condensed, would then consummate a happy biographical marriage.

James Monahan, the *Manchester Guardian* critic, has obviously given a great deal of serious thought to his attempt at defining the qualities of Fonteyn and he makes the reader think equally seriously about the dance. In order to show the ballerina's qualities he has become involved in what really amount to a series of lectures on line, musicality, the rise of British ballet, the faults of the Bolshoi ballet, and so on. Most of what he says could, however, be tacked-on to the life of any great ballerina you care to think of. Fonteyn herself seems to have been rather loosely woven into his occasionally ponderous prose. Her faults are never glossed over nor are her qualities dimmed by the usual gush of over-praise, though he somehow seems to peel them off her like an intellectual strip-tease until in the end you are left with a beautiful body which you feel has no bones. I cannot help wondering whether a person reading this book, who has never seen her, will have a clear picture of what she is and why. But when all is said and done, this is a book to command our respect as being one of the first attempts at treating the art of the ballerina with the serious consideration her status deserves.

It is not easy to forgive Monahan's cursory treatment of Vera Volkova—she is merely mentioned in passing as having been one of Fonteyn's three Russian teachers—because she, more than anyone, was responsible for Fonteyn replacing the chaplet of the ballerina with the glittering crown of the great *ballerina assoluta.* Elizabeth Frank, the critic of the *News Chronicle,* has not made this omission and has given Volkova full credit for the burnishing process she applied to Fonteyn. Her book is a cosy, feminine and easy-to-read life story. She has dug up a number of little incidents —some trivial and worthless, others with a certain portent—which added together give a faint glimmer of what has made Fonteyn tick. She emerges as a person who is kind, simple, natural and with a genuine inability to realise why people think of her as being a rather unusual person. How important this is to anyone other than the readers of women's magazines, I just would not know.

In both cases I feel it to be a mistake—less of a mistake in the Monahan volume as it was not really a biography—for the writers to get their positions as ballet critics mixed up with their job as biographers. From Frank we get *Daphnis and Chloe* called "the most unrewarding of Ashton's works". This and several other such statements make the book less valuable than it otherwise might have been. There are also a number of printer's errors, and some pictures wrongly captioned, which can have had nothing to do with the printers. For instance, a picture of Fonteyn in Ashton's *Les Sirènes* is declared to be the Miller's Wife in *The Three-Cornered Hat,* and one of Swanilda in *Coppélia* is labelled *Cinderella.* These faults are possibly understandable in a magazine which has to rush to get to press, but it is less excusable in a book which must have been seriously considered over a period of time.

If only because she is a great name, most people will want to read both these volumes on Fonteyn, yet if at the end anyone is clearer as to what the true Fonteyn really is, I shall be very surprised. It is only when she gets down to writing her autobiography, a rather unlikely occurrence, that the public will get any nearer to solving the enigma of this professedly undedicated ballerina. When it comes to personalities it is only the autobiography, of which Karsavina's *Theatre Street* is the sublime example, that makes any real contribution to this kind of ballet literature.

P. W.

A treasury of design

Dictionnaire du Ballet Moderne. Edited by Fernand Hazan. (Hazan, Paris, 2.900 *francs.)*

A FEW months ago, we welcomed G. B. L. Wilson's invaluable and inexpensive *A Dictionary of Ballet* (published by Penguin). This French volume is not inexpensive, nor is it really a dictionary at all but more of an encyclopaedia. But to anyone who admires French ballet it is equally invaluable. I specify *French* ballet because whereas there is most of what you want to know about the dance and its allied arts in that country, what is supplied about other countries shows an enormous number of serious omissions. Several eminent writers (England is represented by Mary Clarke and Ronald Crichton) have contributed, though not all their contributions are wholly accurate. Even so I find the volume worth every franc spent on it mainly owing to its 373 enchanting illustrations, out of which 143 are in colour.

It is possibly the designer to whom the book will appeal most. I find it wonderful to have all my favourite designs of the past thirty years all in one volume—and in colour. They have been very well chosen by the editor and not just because they are for the most important ballets; obviously they are there because they happen to be good designs even if some of them are for works which have made no considerable impact on the world. The colour reproduction is excellent. Everyone should buy this as a companion to Wilson's dictionary, and if they cannot arrange to get the French edition, I understand that an English one will be published in the near future.

P. W.

Light in the wilderness

Modern Dance: The Jooss-Leeder Method, by Jane Winearls. (A. & C. Black, 21*s.*)

ONE of the least creditable and most fashionable attitudes towards modern dance is that it is often regarded as only a poor alternative to classical ballet. Another more fraudulent attitude is that it is often judged and compared all along the line by the standards of classical ballet. The first approach fails to recognise that, if well done, it can be as aesthetically satisfying as classical ballet if well done: the second fails to appreciate the fact that it possesses laws of its own by which it must be judged.

That it often fails to achieve a satisfying result is particularly evident, for it is frequently brought into disrepute by the "sincere amateurs" who dance for self-expression without technical equipment. This point is well brought out (together with helpful material on historical trends) in A. V. Coton's shrewd preface—a model of concentrated style and something more than the usual effusive and embarrassing praise commending the author's talents to the reader.

The book does not always make easy reading. It is a text-book. The author has been faced with the almost overwhelming difficulty of fixing movement processes accurately in words, while the reader may often be forced to perform most of the movements described himself if he is to fully comprehend the system.

The Jooss-Leeder method is by far the most scientific training available in modern dance in this country. To me it has almost seemed strongest on the levels of improvisation, creative experiment and the production and development of individual artists. I would have therefore liked Miss Winearls to have extended the latter section of text to devote more space to dance composition and improvisation.

There is undeniable evidence that modern dance has been highly successful in the educational, recreational and remedial fields both here and in America. But in America, where dance is now being taught in 90 per cent of all institutions of higher learning, in most colleges it is significantly wedded to the Physical Education department rather than tied to the Fine Arts section.

There is still an immense gulf to be bridged between the educational and theatrical sides of modern dance, and with so few artists of professional quality to hand, it seems that this "wilderness" (to use Jane Winearls' word) will be present for a long time.

But, broadly speaking, the work abounds in ideas as well as technical instruction, and it should succeed in opening the reader's mind rather than closing it. Throughout the work she has conveniently summarised principles in brief introductory and clearly numbered paragraphs. Peter Crummins's drawings, which convey an excellent feeling of movement, are ideal for this type of book.

E. C. M.

CANADIAN SONG : John Gilpin and Diane Westerman in Jack Carter's charming dance arrangement of the Canadian song A La Claire Fontaine. *This* pas de deux *was one of the many successful dance numbers in the first BBC* Journey into Melody *programme on February 9. Photo: Jack Blake.*

CAPRICHO : Specially created for BBC Television by Alfred Rodrigues and given in Music for You *on February 23. The work is in the pseudo-Spanish style and is based on the 1st movement of the concerto for guitar and orchestra by the Spanish composer, Joaquin Rodrigo. The dancers include Julia Farron, Pirmin Trecu, Annette Page, Ronald Hynd, David Drew, Merle Park, David Shields and Shirley Grahame. The illustration shows Stephen Taylor's décor. Photo: Dominic.*

Stars in Variety

TELEVISION
Reviewed by E. C. MASON

BBC VARIETY

Toni Lander, Norman McDowell and the Studio Dancers in *Journey into Melody*. Designer : Guy Sheppard. Choreography : Jack Carter. Given on BBC Television on March 9.

THE second-rate variety programme has become the television equivalent of "After Dinner Music", and I am told that in America this type of entertainment is termed "relaxative". But while this particular programme was not very exciting, Jack Carter's choreography, though not of his best, was more than good enough to be seen in better surroundings.

In the first dance sequence, *Wonderful Copenhagen,* fidgety camera direction made it impossible for viewers to take it easy — even for this undemanding material. But with the Monte Carlo number and only two dancers to worry about, production improved.

Guy Sheppard's sets were pleasant, but nobody appeared to have given a thought to lighting. Toni Lander danced with style and an easy grace: however, a less-good dancer would have been equally suitable. Norman McDowell's dancing was quite polished — he turns well — but he needs to acquire a wider range of expression. At the moment he is too dead-pan for the close scrutiny of the television camera.

LOVERS' PARTING

Scenario by Jean Cocteau. Music : Richard Blareau. Choreography : Serge Lifar. Given on Granada Independent Television on March 11.

CLAUDE BESSY MAX BOZZONI

ITV is muscling-in nicely into the field of ballet programmes. The most interesting feature to emerge from this entertaining but rather unoriginal work — we have seen so many sexy *pas de deux* set in tatty French bedrooms — was the versatility of the dancers. For both are principals with the Paris Opéra, and this is by no means the organisation which one expects to produce dancers capable of work more suited to a Gene Kelly or an Ann Miller.

Claude Bessy is a good dancer with strong turns, and a loose, exceptionally high *développé,* and she looked appropriately brassy for this rôle. Despite limited space, the use of what I assume to be different lenses (the dancers traverse distances of 20 yards in six steps) gave some interesting perspective effects. The lighting was excellent and the camera direction extremely capable and well-timed.

But surely there has been some mistake. I can't believe that Cocteau can have written a scenario as utterly banal as this!

THE UKRAINIAN STATE COSSACK COMPANY

Given on BBC Television on March 18. Costumes : Anatoly Petritzky. Designer : George Djurkovic. Produced by Margaret Dale.

DESPITE its caution in presenting classical ballet programmes, one of the best things about BBC Television is that it does make it possible for audiences not living in London to view long extracts of the best and most successful international folk-dance spectacles. This programme, the Ukrainian State Cossack Company, was one of the best of the many good programmes that Margaret Dale has so far presented.

A simple setting of fires flickering in the distance or a few leafless trees created a good atmosphere. Moreover, the floor space was large enough to allow the dancers room to execute their most exciting and spectacular feats. Margaret Dale's camera direction concentrated on distance shots which allowed viewers to take in the exciting group movements.

The most attractive numbers were the *Dnieper Cossacks,* the *Gopak* and the *Needlewomen* in the carpet weaving dance. An understanding of the latter enabled the beautiful but simple patterns of the steps to be appreciated—although I think it would have looked even clearer if darker ribbons had been used just for this occasion. At the beginning of the *Turtle Doves'* "flirtation", an unfortunate accident exposed a stage-hand carrying off a tree — like Birnam Wood on march to Dunsinane!

BERYL GREY

In Chelsea At Nine **on Granada Independent Television on March 28. Music : Lizst. Choreography by Audrey de Vos.**

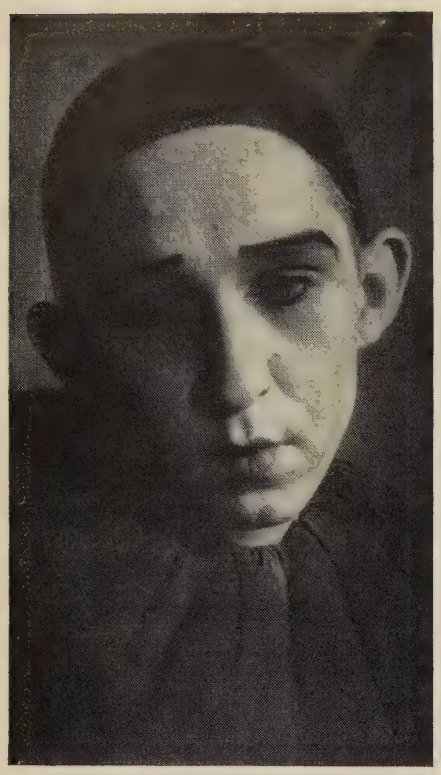
ALTHOUGH very short indeed, this solo entitled *Reverie* to Lizst's *Consolation No. 2,* must be one of the most effective ever seen on television. Its success was due to a number of factors. To begin with, the choreography was extremely simple — few steps were used but they were used superlatively well and were genuinely inspired by the music. Moreover, Audrey de Vos's choreography exploited Beryl Grey's special characteristics, her line and *port de bras,* to the maximum effect. Finally, Beryl Grey's dancing was beautifully polished and completely relaxed.

A vertically designed décor, three narrow arches and a tiny chandelier set as high as possible, cleverly camouflaged the ballerina's height. Her light, floating costume looked attractive in movement, but came dangerously close to blending into the backcloth. But the back of the sofa on which she reclined for the opening shot had a polished wooden end-piece which looked very like a telephone resting under her arm !

Ballet Perspectives: 6

Le Carnaval (Part 2)

by CLIVE BARNES



LATTERDAY PIERROT: David Poole, in Le Carnaval *with the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet. Photo: Ian Gibson Smith.*

The first of two articles on Fokine's Le Carnaval **appeared in the April issue.**

CARNAVAL never achieved the wide popularity of *Les Sylphides*; indeed its revival has been comparatively infrequent. American Ballet Theatre produced the work under Fokine's supervision during their initial season in 1940, and it remained intermittently in their repertory until 1944, at which time Harold Lang was dancing Harlequin. In the other American production of the ballet, by Serge Denham's Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo performances also appear to have been fitful and spluttering, although Leon Danielian seems to have achieved some distinction as Harlequin. In Germany, where they order these things differently and it would never occur to anyone to revive an old choreography if they have a new choreographer ready to hand, the ballet has been given a number of post-war revivals, though in every instance without the Fokine choreography. Willy Fränzel (in Vienna), Jens Keith (in Western Berlin), and Marcel Luipart (in Munich), have all been responsible for different versions. In passing, it is perhaps interesting to mention the curious Danish Ballet *Drommebilleder (Dream Pictures)*, a ballet by Emilie Walbom, first produced by the Royal Danish Ballet in Copenhagen on April 15, 1915. In this ballet Walbom, who nine years earlier had produced a Danish version of Petipa's *Les Millions d'Arlequin*, composed an incredible and unique Danish smorgasbord of a ballet deriving almost equally from Fokine's *Carnaval*, Bournonville and Tivoli.

Although British ballet has in its time treated Fokine's *Carnaval* very badly, the first English production was, in a way, far from undistinguished. This was by the Ballet Rambert on December 30, 1930, at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith. The cast included: Karsavina (Columbine), Diana Gould (Chiarina), Andrée Howard (Papillon), Leon Woizikowsky (Harlequin), Robert Stuart (Pierrot), Frederick Ashton (Eusebius), and Walter Gore (Pantalon). It was significant for British ballet that during the two historic 1930 seasons at the Lyric Theatre, Marie Rambert produced three of Fokine's most famous ballets, all with Karsavina. The Rambert production held its place in the repertory until the early years of the post-war period. Following on Woizikowsky's guest appearances Harold Turner first appeared as Harlequin, a portrayal — later to be famous in the Royal Ballet's production — that still has to be equalled by a British dancer. Walter Gore was another distinguished Rambert Harlequin, and it was for this company that John Gilpin, as a boy, made his only appearances, so far, in this part for which his natural abilities now appear to make him so well suited.

Carnaval was brought into the Royal Ballet repertory in 1933, the first performance taking place on October 24. The décor and costumes were by E. and M. Williams and the work was revived by Wanda Evina, the original cast being Alicia Markova (Columbine), Beatrice Appleyard (Chiarina), Hermione Darnborough (Estrella), Sheilah McCarthy (Papillon), Idzikowsky (Harlequin), Antony Tudor (Pierrot), Stanley Judson (Eusebius), Claude Newman (Pantalon), and Travis Kemp (Florestan).

After a time the ballet dropped out of the repertory until it was revived during the war at the Princes Theatre on October 14, 1944. The Bakst scenery and costumes were revived and the original cast included Margot Fonteyn (Columbine), Pamela May (Chiarina), Julia Farron (Estrella), Pauline Clayden (Papillon), Alexis Rassine (Harlequin), Robert Helpmann (Pierrot), David Paltenghi (Eusebius), Gordon Hamilton (Pantalon), and Leslie Edwards (Florestan). The production was transferred to Covent Garden (first performed at the Opera House on November 18, 1946) where, after a mere six performances, it was abandoned. Apart from the first cast, numerous other dancers appeared in the various rôles, including Margaret Dale, Violetta Elvin and Moira Shearer as Columbine; Beryl Grey, Gerd Larsen and Shearer as Chiarina; Turner as Harlequin; Ashton, Paltenghi and Michael Somes as Pierrot. On the whole, performances were more conscientious than commendable; Harlequins were jolly rather than gay, Columbines naughty rather than mischievous, Chiarinas smug rather than mysterious — and so on, until we come to the Pierrots who alternated between knock-about farce and black tragedy. Certain individual performances — notably Turner's — sometimes stood out, but the background was even more "neutral" than that envisaged by Bakst.

Soon after the formation of the Royal Ballet's second company, the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet, *Carnaval* was transferred to that group. The first performance by this company was given on tour at the Theatre Royal, Brighton, on May 21, 1947, with a cast that included Anne Heaton (Columbine), Pauline Wadsworth (Chiarina), Hazel Walker (Estrella), Nadia Nerina (Papillon), Donald Britton (Harlequin), Leo Kersley (Pierrot), Anthony Burke (Eusebius), Peter Darrell (Pantalon), Kenneth MacMillan (Florestan) — and the *corps de ballet* included John Cranko, David Poole, Michael Boulton and Elaine Fifield.

The ballet remained fairly consistently in the repertory for about eight years, and during the course of time the company produced a standard of performance, if not stylistically impeccable, at least extremely competent. Later casts have included, to give an almost Miltonic list: Nerina, Fifield, Maryon Lane, Sheilah O'Reilly, Patricia Miller, Brenda Bolton, and Susan Alexander as Columbine; Jane Shore, Pamela Chrimes, Joan Cadzow, Stella Claire, Svetlana Beriosova, Sara Neil, Doreen Tempest, Margaret Hill and Annette Page as Chiarina; O'Reilly, Miller, Sheila Nelson, Lane, Kathleen Gorham, Pauline Harrop, Maureen Bruce, Page, and Yvonne Lakier as Papillon; Kersley, Boulton, Pirmin Trecu, David Blair, and Johaar Mosaval as Harlequin; Cranko, Poole, David Gill, Miro Zolan, and Walter Trevor as Pierrot; Michael Hogan, Hans Zullig, Peter Wright, MacMillan, Gilbert Vernon, Donald MacLeary and David Harding as Eusebius; Stanley Holden, Donald McAlpine, Blair, Turner, Zolan, and Leslie White as Pantalon; Gill and Trevor as Florestan. Quite a number of these dancers have proved successful, perhaps most notably the excellently danced Harlequins of Blair and Trecu, the pert Columbine of Lane, the Werther-like Eusebius of Zullig and finally the pathetic Pierrot of Poole, a performance that more than any of the others explored the full potentialities of the rôle.

British revivals of *Carnaval* have been less frequent than those of *Les Sylphides* and *Le Spectre de la Rose*, probably because of the larger number of soloists it demands. However the ballet was included in International Ballet's initial repertory and was given during their first London season at the Lyric Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, in 1941. The scenery and costumes were after Bakst, and the revival was presumably supervised by Idzikowsky, who was *maître de ballet* to the company at the time. The first performances were distinguished by the lively performances given by Nina Tarakanova and Turner as Columbine and Harlequin. The ballet was in the repertory spasmodically for some years, later revivals including Michel de Lutry, Errol Addison, and Yurek Shabalevsky as Harlequin.

The only other performances of *Carnaval* given in London since the war have been by De Basil's Original Ballet Russe (1947), and a British company, George Kirsta's Original Ballet Russe (1951). Both revivals were almost totally undistinguished, although Vania Psota brought style to his playing of Pantalon in the former version. The Harlequin in each instance was Vladimir Dokoudovsky, who was partnered by Olga Morosova (De Basil) and Nina Stroganova (Kirsta).

Dance and Dancers . . . . AT HOME

THE ROYAL BALLET (I) at Covent Garden

A Mixed Bag

HAVING missed the first return performance at Covent Garden of that part of the Royal Ballet which spends so much of its time touring the American continent, I was glad to see the group — is that the right word? — in its first repertory programme consisting of *Les Sylphides, La Péri,* and *The Lady and the Fool.* Annette Page impressed in what I believe was her first London performance of the Prélude in *Les Sylphides,* and despite the unerring artistry of Fonteyn and Somes in *La Péri* the new version confirmed my fears before the American tour that it is choreographically and decoratively inferior to the work's original Covent Garden draft. The dancers made their best impression in a very brightly danced performance of *The Lady and the Fool,* in which the excellence of nearly all the principals almost succeeded in making me forget what a distressing old hack the ballet is. While people like Beriosova can dance it like this, the work will probably remain in the repertory for years, which is a mixed blessing, even if one that deserves our gratitude.

C. B.

Back to The Pagodas

AFTER most American critics had ridden pretty rough-shod over Cranko's first three-acter, and the American public had flocked in, thus proving that they too pay little heed to written criticism, *The Prince of the Pagodas* returned home on February 25. It must be admitted that the London public made no great show of filling the brocaded spaces of Covent Garden and those that did, succeeded in remaining cucumber-cool about the whole thing. However they managed to muster enough energy to give quite a hand to the two principals — Svetlana Beriosova and David Blair. It must, I am afraid, have been very dispiriting for the company to receive such Arctic treatment after the warmth of trans-Atlantic applause over the past five months.

There is no getting away from it though, the ballet *has* got many faults, but as these have been rammed down everybody's throats, almost to choking point since the work was first given in the early hours of 1957, it is boring to reiterate them. It is better to turn to the improvements and these, though hardly major ones, have pulled the ballet together considerably.

I am glad that Julia Farron, as the delightfully nasty La Belle Epine, no longer embarks on a preambulation over male backs ; she has also toned-down what was always a dominant performance to a more plausible one. It has certainly given more point to the divertissement at the beginning of Act 2 now that Beriosova, as the hard-done-by La Belle Rose, gets more mixed up with the elements during her journey to Pagodaland. It was a pity, though, to cut out her airborne exit from the throne-room in Act 1 (Covent Garden has acquired a bad habit of taking flying episodes out of its ballets after a few months). To see a ballerina take to the air surrounded by aerial frogmen used to be a heartening sight, and apart from the fact that it gave a slight taste of theatre magic and the fact that there was an element of danger, it also put the audience into a good humour before the first interval.

But the most substantial change in the production is the wholly admirable performance the work gets from the whole company — from the principals downwards. Nobody could lay any fault of the ballet as a whole at the feet of the dancers. Over the past months all the principals have crystallised their performances, particularly Beriosova and Blair. There is really very little substance in either of their rôles yet somehow they have managed to add personal touches which now make each character more rounded. Beriosova is pitiful and touching in the first act, attractively intrigued by the magical happenings in the second and radiant in the third. Blair achieved a highly successful metamorphosis from reptile to full-blooded Prince. Their final *pas de deux* which used to seem like a prolonged *entrée* now has a greater feeling of consummation. Pirmin Trecu, showing a remarkable progress in everything he has done this season, has made his miniature rôle of the Fool into a broader almost Watteauesque canvas. Both Maryon Lane and Brian Shaw made the Fire *pas de deux* sizzle like fire-crackers which would have aroused any but the Covent Garden audience to near frenzy point. All of which goes to prove exactly why foreign companies no longer want to appear before an English audience.

Beginning and ending with Stravinsky

ON the same evening, March 3, that Helpmann returned to ballet in *The Rake's Progress* (reviewed elsewhere) the remainder of the programme consisted of two Stravinsky ballets with Nadia Nerina in the principal rôles.

When Ashton first created *Scènes de Ballet,* 68-performances-at-Covent-Garden ago, it was greeted with little enthusiasm from the average critic. That some were not so average and that their still small unpopular voices were heard, has caused the ballet to win through. It is not unamusing to see that some of those average critics have changed their tune considerably over the years and are now pretending that they always liked the ballet anyway. Today this lovely work is acclaimed by critic and public alike, as well it deserves to be.

The asymmetric patterns of Ashton's choreography amount to some of his finest work. Nobody will ever pretend that Stravinsky's score is among his most notable achievements nor was it even intended to be, composed as it was for a Billy Rose revue. But even third-rate Stravinsky is more exciting than first-rate almost anyone else composing for ballet today, with the possible exception of Britten. What Ashton has created makes the scene seem far better than it actually is.

This apotheosis of a classical ballet has *entrées, soli, adages* and *ensembles* which are so unobvious that at each viewing their ingenuity comes as something of a shock — an agreeable shock. It is one of those ballets which those who are always looking for hidden meanings can have quite a field day with, yet it can be just as satisfactory to those who only look for good excuses for dancing.

An almost essential quality for the ballerina in this ballet should be great chic. This, I am afraid, Nerina has not got, but she is technically so brilliant that she can almost be forgiven — not quite because there were moments when she did not seem to be very conscious of the music. Nor could I see why she had to have such an unattractive headdress and hair-do which made her look harder than was necessary.

The principal male rôle should be solemnly virile and technically precise. All of this was realised by Somes when he created it and he now has a fine successor in Brian Shaw. His four male associates were as good as they have ever been except that David Drew, replacing Bryan Ashbridge at the very last moment, was not quite certain which way he should turn sometimes. Apart from this understandable fault he showed, as he had previously in the Apollo rôle from *Sylvia,* that he has the most elegant line of any of the Royal Ballet's young entry. The twelve *corps de ballet* ladies were well disciplined throughout, though I wish that they did not always dance as though somebody had stuck a curved poker down their backs.

Beaurepaire's designs have become the perfect post-war period piece and I doubt if anybody could improve on them. Let us hope that now this work has returned so successfully to the Royal Ballet's repertoire it will not be allowed to depart again. It is the perfect opening ballet and such a relief after the eternal diet of *Les Sylphides.*

Fire Without Heat

But if *Scènes de Ballet* is hardly vintage Stravinsky, then *The Firebird,* which ended the programme, most certainly is. Not that this was always apparent in the uninspired conducting of Hugo Rignold. Nor frankly was this anything like a vintage performance from anyone concerned. Nerina in the title rôle is something of a puzzle. Her jumps are thrilling on her first entrances, her *arabesque* is high and she *dances* quite beautifully all that is asked of her, yet she sends no thrill down my spine and at the end leaves me quite unmoved by any emotion. Does Nerina feel anything of this rôle? If she does, she seems unable to project it over the footlights. Never does she convey a vestige of fear as Ivan Tsarevitch captures her, nor of the delight of freedom as she is released nor of her magical powers as she causes the rout of Kostchei to dance to sleep. It was the realisation of these things that made Fonteyn's performance so memorable and, though to a lesser extent, the later performances of Elvin.

The Ivan Tsarevitch of Philip Chatfield was a disappointment. He was always acting the rôle and never living it. Until somebody other than Somes plays this part it is impossible to realise just how difficult it is. One of the several wonders of the Royal Ballet's first production of this ballet was the fact that a completely English male dancer should be out to get himself inside the skin of a person who was wholly of ancient Russia. That Somes could convey the mixture of peasant and noble in this Prince, placed him high in the short list of notable characterisations of our time. Chatfield went through all the right movements and gestures but there was little conviction behind them. He must learn to simplify every gesture and give added weight to all his mime. For instance a Prince of this kind would never make a hurried fussy movement, everything would be slow and ponderous, he would also put his cap on naturally and not as though he was inspecting confections in a milliners.

Rosemary Lindsay, as the Tsarevna, was good in the first scene with the golden apples, but she made a serious mistake at the end of the ballet. When the attendants were placing the cloak around her shoulders

in the thanksgiving scene, she looked down at them and smiled. A real Princess would never do this as the extreme dignity of this moment is partly caused by her looking straight ahead without even glancing to left or right.

P. W.

NEXT MONTH : There will be reviews of the Royal Ballet's Sleeping Beauty **with most of the company's leading ballerinas in the Princess Aurora rôle. Also of the two casts in Kenneth MacMillan's** Solitaire **and Helpmann in** Petrushka.

BALLET RAMBERT

WITH Nerina giving such fine performances in *Coppélia* at Covent Garden and with memories of Violette Verdy's captivating Swanilda by no means dim, anyone could have thought the Ballet Rambert a trifle reckless in inviting comparisons by presenting the work in their out-of-London season at the Grand Theatre, Croydon.

Nevertheless, their new Swanilda, Lucette Aldous, who is, I believe, still in her 'teens, gave such a remarkably brilliant performance that she received more curtain calls than could be counted and, despite the cold, loud cheers from a suburban audience. There is no doubt whatsoever that she is both the best dancer Madame Rambert has produced in recent years and by far the most promising dancer in this country today.

She seems to have everything required to earmark her for a brilliant career. Her technique is as good as anyone has a right to expect and it should satisfy the severest critics. Her first two acts are quite perfect (her Scottish and Spanish dances are given with tremendous verve), and when she receives a few more performances and a slightly better understanding with her partner, Norman Dixon, her last act should acquire the technical brilliance which it only just lacked.

Marie Rambert's production is our most fastidiously detailed and unified version of *Coppélia,* and it is soundly based on her theory that Coppélius is the poet (he was movingly portrayed by Norman Morrice) and that the ballet's humour is derived from Swanilda. And here Lucette Aldous neither underplayed nor overstepped the bounds of taste in bringing out the comedy. Her acting is spontaneous and there is such an enchanting freshness about her interpretation that it is genuinely worth going considerable distances to see.

Despite the hazards of touring, there is an overall technical improvement in the company and the *corps* is unbelievably good. This was evident in the *Mazurka* and *Czardas* and *pas de six* in Act 1 of *Coppélia,* and in Act 2 of *Giselle* which was given earlier in the week with *Gala Performance.*

In the first programme, Ann Horn gave a very carefully thought out and sensitive rendering of Giselle, which was all of one piece and devoid of fussiness and irritating touches out of harmony with the production; Lucette Aldous and John O'Brien gave a very stylish danced Peasant *pas de deux* which was more in keeping with the Romantic style of the work than we are accustomed to seeing; and Gillian Martlew gave a very strong characterisation to the Queen of the Wilis.

Other dancers who showed considerable promise in smaller rôles were Thelma Litster, Jennifer Dodd, Valerie Marsh, Elsa Recagno, June Sandbrook and Shirley Dixon.

E. C. M.

A NEW SWANILDA : Lucette Aldous recently took over the rôle of Swanilda in the Ballet Rambert Coppélia. *The promise that this dancer showed during the last Ballet Rambert season at Sadler's Wells has been amply fulfilled.*
Photo : John Chesworth.

UKRAINIAN STATE COSSACK COMPANY

WHAT is it that Russian dancing has got that other dancing hasn't? It has a quality as difficult to describe as a personality, and just as a personality is the result of the interplay between heredity and environment, so this peculiar Russian quality can be seen as the result of national dance characteristics and training. It shines through almost all the Russian dance imports we have seen, whether they be ballet companies, like the Bolshoi or Stanislavsky, or national dance companies like the Moiseyev. The latest Soviet visitors to dazzle us were the dancers of the Ukrainian State Cossack Company, who opened a fortnight's season at the Albert Hall on February 19 and, after a short provincial tour, came to Princes Theatre on March 19.

Like the fantastic Moiseyev troupe before them, this group also produced a programme that was dancing all through, with no breather-taking pauses, either musical or choral, to detract from the breath-taking spectacle. Yet whereas the Moiseyev Ensemble took their dances and artists from all over Russia, this present company originates entirely from the Ukraine, one of the Soviet Socialist Republics. It was as though Texas had turned up here with a ballet company.

To those who find the sight of yard upon yard of biliously coloured sateen unforgiveable, this company, equally with the Moiseyev, must be ruled out of court. It was, of course, terribly vulgar, and its dress sense would hardly pass muster in Bond Street window displays. Personally my stomach is strong enough not to be upset by a spot of gimcrack spiv finery, yet I mention the point knowing that many are not so constituted.

The Artistic Director is a man called Pavel Virsky, and — sateen perhaps apart — it was soon obvious that he had done a wonderful job. The various items were beautifully arranged in a programme that had pace, variety and contrast. Here and there were numbers which one could have done without. (For myself I feel as though I have seen enough funny puppet dances to last me two or three lifetimes), but then you can never please all of the people — not even such sitting ducks for Russian dancing as myself — all of the time. Yet the moments of slight boredom were very few, and counted for nothing against the moments of most wonderful exhilaration which were very many.

On looking back on such an entertainment, it is inevitable that we should repeatedly recall the instants of excitement: those when the men spin with the poised naturalness of a child's top, or jump in the air with a bound that seems almost to defeat gravity, or, again, smoothly meditating, crouching on their haunches, flinging out their legs effortlessly in the traditional *prisiadka.* Yet it is not these lightning flashes of virtuosity that gave the evening its special air, but much more the gentle glow of the company's *ensemble* dancing. Russian dancers, whether they are classical or character, always seem to have the ability to be people first and dancers second. The barely noticeable glance that passes between boy and girl, the cocky grin of success, the secretively feminine smiles as the women weave in amongst one another, intent on their mysteries. The Russians dance as others breathe, and appear to give it little more importance.

There is no self-consciousness about their movements. The pattern of women gliding across the floor securely unaffected, and of men parading around them, swaying slightly with their proud peacock-strut, presents a picture of human dignity. Technical considerations hardly enter into a discussion of their dancing; everything has been forgotten, because everything has been learnt.

Yet all this naturalness, this gaiety, this abandon, needs a frame. And it is here that this Cossack troupe has been notably successful. Its producers, principally Pavel Virsky, have succeeded in the realisation of dances that are not simply an arrangement of steps derived or adapted from traditional sources. They have conceived each dance as an entity which has had to be given its own particular shape in both space and time. That this has not been accomplished with the highly conscious skill of Igor Moiseyev, gives the Cossack troupe a touch of the spontaneity that was perhaps absent from the deservedly more illustrious Moiseyev Ensemble. These Cossacks were not so breathtaking, not so wonderful, not so devilish clever as the earlier group, yet for all that they possibly have more charm, a charm that revealed itself even in the occasional mistake and slight flaw. I thought I had become satiated with dance groups and never wanted to see another again. How glad I was when these Cossacks proved me wrong !

C. B.

DANCE LECTURES

HANYA HOLM

Dance Notation in Musical Comedy

HOW rapidly but how amusingly this lecture strayed from its subject. It could have been called "Hanya Holm on the Musical Today", for, apart from notation, it embraced comments on musicals in

general with particular references to *My Fair Lady* and *Where's Charley?*

Generally speaking, in the field of literature American scholars seem preoccupied with the accumulation of facts, such as Byron's laundry bills, etc., rather than with original criticism and interpretation. But in the field of dance, especially modern dance, America produces serious thinkers with original questing minds whose like are not to be found this side of the Atlantic. So in the past few months the British Dance Notation Society has sponsored lectures from both Doris Humphrey, and from the choreographer of *Kiss Me, Kate, My Fair Lady* and *Where's Charley?*, Hanya Holm.

Introductory remarks produce the worst moments: the speakers are never quite at ease and we are not tuned to their accents. So Doris Humphrey sounded like someone from a production of *Oklahoma!* and Hanya Holm, mixing America and the Continent, more like a character from *I Remember Mama.* Though at first they may seem odd, eccentric or even phoney to us, once they get into their stride they are able to give a particularly analytic and illuminating picture of dance as they have thought about it, as they have discovered it.

Hanya Holm showed a shrewd intelligence when answering questions (leading into a hectic general discussion on this occasion) by refusing to be intimidated into endorsing the opinions of some questioners whose views were slanted and who knew the answers to their own questions. While her predecessor, Doris Humphrey, was clearly anti-classical ballet, Hanya Holm refused to speak against it. She created no sensations. She maintained a very crafty and judicious balance, giving each cause what she honestly felt was its due.

On the subject of notation, she was comparatively brief. She finds that it is much easier now and so much more can be written than when she first studied it in Germany. But there is still a certain reluctance to use a script as dancers tend to feel that to write down is to intellectualise that which is done so poetically with the body. She considers that one of its main advantages is its ability to relieve the mind in memory. "Who knows," she asks, "what happened ten years ago? No one is around any more. No one remembers." For students it is a clarification in that they are forced to analyse all movements, but, she has found few dancers prepared to devote themselves to this type of logic.

It is, she said, almost impossible to use film to reproduce dance — even by running it over and over again — because of the actual speed of movement. She cited a film of Markova where she came up against so much fluidity in the movement that it was almost impossible to recapture any given moment. But by notation dance can be reconstructed and handed on by anyone who can read it. *Kiss Me, Kate,* was produced here from a script, and if the dancers had been able to read it, too, the method would have been ideal. In America the notator's services are now often required by the major companies, and she believes that the rôle of notator/script-interpreter must become a new profession.

In America the position of the musical is this: once a show has finished on Broadway it becomes available for "summer stock" or amateurs, and it then undergoes the process of being redone and adapted in varying degrees to fit other stages. But there is still no copyright protection whatsoever for the choreographer. "What can you do?" she asks. "They change it a little here and a little bit there all the way through." *Kate* was sent in for copyright registration but the Board just didn't know what to do about such a case!

Dancers, too, by comparison with singers, are at a disadvantage through the general opinion that they give a show a lift but that they are not essential. However, she said, dance is coming more and more "into it" as an integrated part of the show. She referred to the Ascot Gavotte from *My Fair Lady,* which comes from the action and goes back into the action without interrupting the plot. She labels it a book show where the freedom to go haywire simply doesn't exist. It sticks close to G.B.S., and, apart from a Flower Market scene, few liberties have been taken.

A problem encountered when notating *My Fair Lady* was that the movements were written down exactly in notation but some were not quite right, or, to put it better, they could not be danced exactly as written because of differences in costume design. Each costume automatically gave the dancer another "line" to her part. Again, it was extremely difficult to reproduce individual rôles in the *corps,* when, although each dancer does identical steps, for one the strongest movement occurs on the first beat of the bar, but for another perhaps on the fourth beat.

She considers that English dancers are now much more satisfactory material. Since the post-war American musicals in which our dancers have worked with American choreographers, it has been in order to give attention to something other than the balletic treatment. Yes, she said, now something near the same standard is approached. But her main enemy is time. If we only imitate, we may produce a caricature of the American way of life through not being familiar with the environment. We must understand also, and the process of understanding takes time. In *My Fair Lady* in America she had the problem in reverse — to make the dancers think, feel and behave British.

Ten years ago Balanchine did the choreography for *Where's Charley?* and the whole show was built around a tapper, Ray Bolger, a "Class-A" one. "Here, I'm stuck," she said. "We have a comic who don't dance. What do I do . . . we have all this music already? Loesser (the composer) says don't cut anything out, don't add anything either. But I take the risk, I make concessions. I cut some out. I added some, too. I added a whole percussion piece and I repeated a small section of 16 bars three times with different orchestrations to relieve the monotony. I'm glad," continued Hanya Holm, "I'd forgotten Bolger's dancing in the show — it would have been a tremendous disadvantage if I hadn't."

But dance is not the all-saving factor producers sometimes imagine it to be. Often dancers are called in when the show is going "vurry difficult." She then spoke about a show she had a finger in which folded in Boston. Cheryl Crawford produced, Blitzstein composed the music — everyone sweated and put their life-blood into it to make it go — Eddie Albert even swallowed fire and jumped from a trapeze. The movement was so good, but it couldn't save it. There were other elements, more important reasons, reasons of logic, which prevented it from being a success.

The dance, she concluded, gives a lot to a show, whether it be a hunk in the middle or integrated into the plot. It is not usually thought of, but, dared Hanya Holm, take it out, and see what happens! **E. C. M.**

Dance and Dancers . . . . ABROAD

FRANCE

THE PARIS OPERA

THE struggle which has been in progress for some months between the administration and the dancers at the Opéra has now entered a critical phase. As discussions had failed to give them satisfaction, the dancers organised a series of surprise strikes between October and February which finally culminated in their refusal to take part in the Wednesday programmes of ballet. The Direction therefore decided to risk a trial of strength. And so on February 24, members of the *corps de ballet* received letters of dismissal for breach of contract.

The leading dancers, including Tallchief and Skibine, have not been affected by this action. Thus in this great Opera House, suddenly deserted since the beginning of March, there only remain representatives of the extreme ranks of the glorious hierarchy—on the one level the "rats" and on the other the principal dancers and *maîtres de ballet.*

The situation is a result of demands for salary adjustments in all the national theatres. The dancers, however, are not in favour of accepting the increase of 10 per cent which has already been approved of by the technicians who have resumed work at the Opéra and the Comédie Française. Moreover, they wanted to be re-engaged as a group; not after each had been "carpeted" individually into submission. Meanwhile, a section of the lower ranks has weakened and refused to stand by the decisions of their seniors. The problem is most complex. In effect it is just as much a crisis of morale as of economics, with sentimental factors also interfering.

While waiting for this deplorable situation to be settled, some *Concerts de Danse* were arranged. On March 5, for example, a programme comprised *Variations,* which was dominated by the radiant presence of Claire Motte, and *Les Pas et les Lignes* with Claude Bessy and Michel Renault. *Le Cygne Noir* was not altogether suitable for Liane Daydé, who appeared possessed by the demon of gymnastics! However, she was well partnered by the noble and elegant Peter Van Dijk. Preceding *Romeo and Juliet, Idylle* seemed rather lost on the vast stage, although in it George Skibine (who appeared with Marjorie Tallchief) showed that he had regained some of his old form. *Suite en Blanc* concluded this programme without suffering too much from the cuts made in its *ensembles.*

Such spectacles as this must only be considered exceptional. We cannot, however, easily accept the fact that there should be so many grave problems, whether acknowledged or not, facing the Company on the eve of its forthcoming visit to the Bolshoi Theatre. No sooner had we seen Nina Vyroubova leave, then Yvette Chauviré, the company's most brilliant dancer, was allowed to go. Such blood-letting as this could well be a death-blow.

NEWS IN BRIEF

AT the Théâtre de l'Etoile, the Polish Parnella troupe has followed the José Torres Spanish Company.

MAYA OBEL. Recently appeared Zarzuela Theatre, Madrid. Trained by Lalagia

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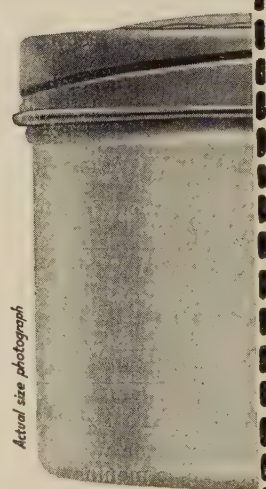

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AFTER its now traditional long stay at Cannes, the Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas began its Paris season at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées on March 21. The opening programme was *Gâité Parisienne* and Lifar's *Noir et Blanc* and *L'Amour et son destin.*

THE Strasbourg Opera is to present *Billard,* with music by Serge Nigg and choreography in the neo-classical style by Jean Combes. The ballet is based on a theme of Nicholas Wingberg and the principal dancers will be Denise Wassler and Jean Garcia. Incidentally, the work was given its first presentation at the Holland Festival of 1951 with choreography by Françoise Adret.

Marie-Françoise Christout.

AMERICA

NEW DANCE FOUNDATIONS

JEROME ROBBINS, who is choreographer and director of *West Side Story* and Associate Artistic Director of the New York City Ballet, has announced the establishment of a new foundation whose funds are to be used to aid the field of dance in the United States. Named the Lena Robbins Foundation in memory of his mother, this project is already at work on research on ways and means of developing choreographic talent in America by assisting choreographers in attaining public presentation of new works.

"The problems we are examining now," says Robbins, "are those faced by the individual artist who must first gather together a performing group and then be prepared to meet and underwrite all the expenses involved in preparing for a performance. One of the obstacles confronting the neophyte choreographer is the problem of gathering together a group of dancers to work with. The foundation is now enquiring into the possibility of forming such a group for this purpose and placing it at specified periods of time at the disposal of those choreographers it feels worthy of encouragement."

A further and completely separate undertaking of the Foundation will be to consolidate within itself an organisation that will create a film library to record the most important contemporary works and great individual interpretations of established classics of ballet and modern dance. Regarding this, Robbins states: "It is most important that we have a record of not only *what,* but *how* we danced. We must be able to observe works in their original state and be able to watch the specific, subtle and elusive qualities of performance and performers which are outside of the actual choreography itself, and which no system of dance notation or verbal description is ever able to realise. Such a record would be of infinite value to our American culture and to the stimulation and education of those concerned with theatre and choreography. Furthermore, what would be recorded are the choreographer's original intentions as to the dramatic and kinetic dynamics which sooner or later become lost in our tribal ritual of handing down choreography from dancer to dancer, and during which so much of the original meaning is watered away." It is claimed that the extremely ambitious project of this film library will necessitate the financial participation of other interested individuals and agencies.

MARTHA GRAHAM'S SEASON

MARTHA GRAHAM'S two-week New York season, the first in five years, opened at the Adelphi Theatre on April 1, too late for review in this issue. The opening night Gala featured the world première of Graham's first full evening-length work, *Clytemnestra,* to a commissioned score by Halim El-Dabh and with settings by Isamu Noguchi. The other new work premièred was *Embattled Garden,* with choreography by Graham to music by Carlos Surinach, again with settings by Noguchi, and featuring Yuriko, Bertram Ross, Matt Turney and Glen Tetley. Other works offered were *Seraphic Dialogue, Diversion of Angels, Deaths and Entrances, Night Journey, Appalachian Spring* and *Cave of the Heart.* In addition to Graham, her Dance Company included Yuriko, Helen McGehee, Ethel Winter, Matt Turney, Bertram Ross, Stuart Hodes, Glen Tetley, David Wood, Ellen Siegel, Miriam Cole, Gene McDonald, Paul Taylor, Bette Shaler, Ellen Graff, Akiko Kanda, Carol Payne, Lois Schlossberg, Richard Kuch and Dan Wagoner. The special orchestra was under the direction of Eugene Lester and the lighting was by Jean Rosenthal.

JUILLIARD DANCE THEATRE

DURING mid-April, the Juilliard Dance Theatre, under the direction of Doris Humphrey, presented two evenings of dance at the Juilliard Concert Hall. These included premières of three new works by guest choreographers José Limón, Donald McKayle and Anna Sokolow as well as a revival of Doris Humphrey's *Partita,* set to Bach's Partita No. 5, in G Major.

José Limón's *Missa Brevis* was set to Zoltan Kodaly's score of the same name. Limón and members of his company were joined by members of the Juilliard Dance Theatre for the performances. The work was sung by members of the Juilliard Chorus, under the direction of Frederick Prausnitz.

The Juilliard Dance Theatre also presented the first performance of Donald McKayle's *Out of the Chrysalis,* set to Ernest Bloch's *Four Episodes,* for piano, winds and strings. The third novelty was Anna Sokolow's *Session '58,* with a score by Teo Macero.

BALLETS DE PARIS RETURNS

THE third dance group to open in New York in April prior to the première of the Moiseyev Dancers at the Metropolitan Opera House was Roland Petit's Ballets de Paris, who opened an extended engagement at the Broadway Theatre on April 7 under the direction of Arthur Lesser. Starring Roland Petit and Jeanmaire, the company presented three out of its four new works on each programme together with *Carmen,* always a great popular favourite in America.

BALLET THEATRE PLANS

BEFORE opening their European tour in Casablanca on April 28, the American National Ballet Theatre presented a programme of four new ballets at the Phoenix Theatre on April 21. As detailed previously, these included William Dollar's *The Birds* to Respighi's music; *Octet,* also choreographed by Dollar, to Stravinsky's score; a new work by Herbert Ross and another by Enrique Martinez to an original score by Kenneth Schermerhorn. Three of these works were performed by the professional company, the fourth by American Ballet Theatre's Workshop.

MARY WIGMAN VISITS AMERICA

MARY WIGMAN, the world-famous modern dancer and teacher in Germany, made her first visit to America this Spring after an absence of twenty-five years. Planned purely as a holiday, Wigman has been visiting classes and attending the theatre and concerts in New York, Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles. During her stay in New York, Arthur Todd, DANCE AND DANCERS' American Correspondent, gave a party in her honour that was attended by a distinguished and representative group of American dancers, choreographers, editors and critics. Among those who turned out to meet and greet Mary Wigman were Martha Graham, Agnes de Mille, José Limón, Anna Sokolow, Pearl Lang, May O'Donnell, Alwin Nikolais and Murray Louis. The following members of the American dance press were also on hand to greet this distinguished visitor: John Martin of the *New York Times*; Walter Terry of the *New York Herald-Tribune*; Lydia Joel, Editor-in-Chief, Doris Hering, Associate Editor, Jean Gordon, Associate Publisher and Rudolf Orthwine, Publisher, of *Dance Magazine;* Anatole Chujoy, Editor and Publisher, and P. W. Manchester, Managing Editor, of *Dance News*; Louis Horst, Editor of *Dance Observer*; and Lillian Moore, American Correspondent of *The Dancing Times.* Also on hand were Carl Van Vechten, Ann Hutchinson of the Dance Notation Bureau, and Genevieve Oswald, Curator of the Dance Department of the New York Public Library.

NEW YORK CITY BALLET

DURING mid-March the New York City Ballet started its tour of the Orient and Australia with a twenty-two performance schedule in Tokyo. Being the first completely foreign ballet company to be seen in Japan, the New York City Ballet has already been honoured by the attendance of members of the Imperial Family, Prime Minister Nobuske Kishi and a cheering audience that tossed flowers on the stage the night of the opening performance. The company also appeared in Osaka during the International Music Festival.

Arthur Todd.

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SUNDAY BALLET CLUB

Continued from page 9

irrelevant prologue, in which the designer, Dan Snyder, walks across the stage mouthing an incomprehensible gibberish of cod Chinese and Russian to a background of concrete noises. What it means, only God, Snyder and possibly the Western Theatre Ballet know, and I am not at all sure about God. It is as though the Narrator from *The Teahouse of the August Moon* had incomprehensibly decided to wait for Godot.

After this disastrous opening, the ballet improves, but not quickly. One of its basic themes of a primitive society misapplying the war-surplus gifts of the ever bountiful Western democracies, is at no time made clear, although Snyder's setting does its best in this direction with considerable ingenuity. Yet once the political symbolism of the ballet really gets under way with its allegorical presentation of power politics and corruption, everything takes a turn for the better.

Apart from its failure to do the impossible and make clear its incomprehensible narrative, the choreography's principal fault was its general lack of homogeneity. Dancing, gesture and expressionistic movement were all used by Brunner quite indiscriminately, yet never developed into a style. At the end I felt I had been given a glimpse of what might have been an exciting ballet, had the statement of its theme been more direct, and the gimmicks of its creators less obvious. The music by Thomas Rajna, a name new to me, seemed to possess at first hearing worthwhile qualities of integrity and construction.

The work was wholeheartedly produced by the Western Theatre Ballet, and there were three performances of considerable worth. The first was by Anna Paskevska as the native Prostitute, whose ambition to become a pop-corn magnate provides the ballet's symbolic thread. Almost equal to this skilful characterisation were the performances of a Canadian newcomer Laverne Meyer and Erling Sunde. The latter in the rôle of the Stranger sinisterly recalled the menace of Sigurd Leeder as the Profiteer in Jooss's *The Big City*.

Now that so many of our ballets are half-baked, it made a welcome change to see one that might be called over-cooked. Yet this was a perfectly serious attempt to get away from the general run and consequently demands our sympathy for that, if nothing else. Nevertheless, I could not help wondering what the provincial audiences who are to represent the Western Theatre Ballet's daily bread-and-butter will make of a work which nonplussed the specialised art public of London. But that is someone else's problem.

CARNIVAL IN TRINIDAD

Choreography, Boscoe Holder. Music, Traditional. Costumes executed by Murray Arbied.

THE programme closed with a cheerful West Indian *divertissement* arranged by Boscoe Holder and performed by dancers from his troupe. Holder's work, genial and within its limits quite slickly professional, is already fairly well known in London.

The inclusion of this cabaret-style item has already brought forth a good deal of adverse comment. Although it was fairly good of its kind, its kind was not good for an experimental ballet evening. Still, it proved popular, and at the conclusion of the performance, Dr. Julian Braunsweg is reported to have said to the club's director: "Young man, you know ze secret of success in ballet — send ze people 'ome 'appy." And that, I suppose, is something.

COVER STORIES

This month's front cover, by Roy Round, is of Robert Helpmann and Anya Linden in Helpmann's ballet version of Hamlet. The work was revived, after several years absence, by the Royal Ballet for its annual gala on March 27.

ROBERT HELPMANN was born in Mount Gambia, Australia in 1909. He became interested in ballet when he first saw Anna Pavlova dance in that country and later he studied with her. In 1932 he came to England to study with Ninette de Valois at the Vic-Wells School. Two years later he created his first rôle as the Master of Treginnis in de Valois's *The Haunted Ballroom*. Gradually he rose to become the principal male dancer of the Vic-Wells Ballet and over the years he has created the principal rôles in an incredible number of ballets, rôles which range from the purely classical to numerous character parts. He became the chief male partner of Margot Fonteyn and this partnership, which reached its height during the war years, was one of the principal factors in the rapid rise of the Sadler's Wells Ballet. In 1939 he did his first choreography for the R.A.D. Production Club — *La Valse*. Three years later this was followed by *Comus, The Birds* and *Hamlet. Miracle in the Gorbals* was first created in 1944. In 1950, Helpmann left the Sadler's Wells Ballet to go into the straight theatre, where as an actor and producer he has made a very successful career for himself.

ANYA LINDEN was born in Manchester, England, in 1933. She first studied in America with Kosloff and Pring. In 1947 she joined the Sadler's Wells School, entering the company at Covent Garden in 1951. Three years later she became a soloist. Since then she has taken over a number of important rôles and, as well as dancing soloist rôles with great distinction, she has already appeared as Princess Aurora in *The Sleeping Beauty* and Swanilda in *Coppélia*.

Ballet Dates

THE ROYAL BALLET
at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden

Apr.
17 *The Shadow, Giselle* (Beriosova, Chatfield)
19 **(M)** *Les Patineurs, Hamlet, Ballet Imperial*
21 *Les Sylphides, The Firebird, Petrushka*
23 *Solitaire, The Lady and the Fool, The Firebird*
26 **(M)** *Solitaire, Giselle* (Fonteyn, Somes)
28 *Ballet Imperial, The Lady and the Fool, Petrushka*
30 *The Shadow, Giselle* (Fonteyn, Somes)

May
1 *The Sleeping Beauty* (Nerina, Blair)
2 *The Sleeping Beauty* (Beriosova, Chatfield)
3 *The Sleeping Beauty* (Jackson, Somes)
5 *The Sleeping Beauty* (Fonteyn, Somes)
6 *The Sleeping Beauty* (Linden, Blair)
7 *Les Sylphides, Petrushka, The Lady and the Fool*
8 *Les Sylphides, Petrushka, Homage to the Queen*
10 **(M)** *The Sleeping Beauty* (Jackson, Chatfield)
10 **(E)** *The Sleeping Beauty* (Nerina, Blair)
13 *Ballet Imperial, Hamlet, Petrushka*
17 **(M)** *The Shadow, Coppélia* (Nerina, Blair)
17 **(E)** *The Shadow, Coppélia* (Jackson, Blair)
20 *Ballet Imperial, The Rake's Progress, Petrushka*
22 *Les Sylphides, The Firebird, Coppélia,* Act 3
23 *Solitaire, Giselle* (Fonteyn, Somes)
23 The Royal Ballet opens a season of one week at the International Exhibition in Brussels.

THE ROYAL BALLET
(formerly Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet)

Apr
14 The Coventry Theatre, Coventry
21 The Royal Court, Liverpool
28 Olympia Theatre, Dublin

May
5 Grand Opera House, Belfast (2 weeks)
19 The Grand Theatre Blackpool
26 The Alhambra Theatre, Bradford

June
2 The Theatre Royal, Newcastle
23 The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden (2 weeks)

July
7 The Opera House, Cheltenham (Festival)

FESTIVAL BALLET

Apr.
17-27 Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt, Paris
29-May 5 Théâtre de l'Opéra, Nice

May
9-21 Sao Carlos Opera House, Lisbon
24-27 Théâtre de l'Opéra, Marseilles

June
2-14 Israel
17-22 Staatstheater, Zurich
24-29 Deutsches Theater, Munich

July
7, 8 Théâtre de l'Opéra, Paris
11-13 Festival of Nervi, Genoa
17-Sept. 13. The Royal Festival Hall, London

WESTERN THEATRE BALLET

Apr.
28 Theatre Royal, Margate

May
5 Theatre Royal, Bath
12 St. Luke's College, Exeter
19 Theatre Royal, Bristol
26 Dartington Hall, Totnes

June
2 Palace Theatre, Reading

EUROPEAN FESTIVALS

The following festivals have announced that they will present dance and ballet programmes. Full details will be given at the earliest possible date.

WIESBADEN—May 24-26, American Ballet Theatre; May 31, The State Opera Ballet of Belgrade in *The Devil in the Village* and in operas *Prince Igor* and *Katja Kabanova* on May 30 and June 1.

BORDEAUX—May 13-15, The Paris Opéra Ballet; May 25, Coros Y Danzas of Spain.

COPENHAGEN Royal Danish Ballet Festival—May 17, *La Ventana, Night Shadow, Graduation Ball*; May 18, *Romeo and Juliet*; May 30, *Serenade, Don Quixote, Moonreindeer, Fanfare*; May 21, *Coppélia*; May 22, *Chopiniana, Le Spectre de la Rose, Symphony in C*; May 23, *Concerto Barocco, Floral Fête, Variations, Apollon Musagetes*; May 24, *Et Folkesagn*; May 27, *The Pas de Quatre, Vision, The Nutcracker pas de deux, Fever, Skaelmeri*; May 29, *La Sylphide, Graduation Ball*; May 30, to be announced; May 31, *Serenade, Don Quixote, Moonreindeer, Fanfare.*

BATH—May 29-June 7. Soloists of the Royal Danish Ballet.

BERGEN (Norway)—May 30-June 15

ZURICH—June 17-23, London's Festival Ballet in *The Nutcracker* and other ballets.

STOCKHOLM—June 1-14, Swedish Royal Ballet in *The Sleeping Beauty, Coppélia, Gala Performance, Minotaurus*, etc.

HOLLAND (Amsterdam, The Hague)—June 15-July 15, Foreign and Dutch Ballet companies.

GRANADA—June 24, 25 Falla's *La Vida Breve* and *The Three-Cornered Hat* with Victorio de los Angeles and Antonio's Spanish Ballet. June 27-29, The Paris Opéra Ballet. July 3, 4, Antonio's Spanish Ballet.

DUBROVNIK—July 1-Aug. 31. The Belgrade Opera Ballet in *The Devil in the Village, Giselle, El Amor Brujo, La Reine des Iles* (middle of August). Ensemble of Serbian Folk Dancers (end of July). Ensemble of Croatian Folk Dancers (beginning of August). Ensemble of Macedonian Folk Dancers (end of August).

GENOA—The Festival of Nervi, beginning to end of July. Dancers of the Royal Ballet with Beriosova and Blair. London's Festival Ballet. Members of the Royal Danish Ballet and several other companies.

SANTANDER — July 25-August 31. Antonio's Spanish Ballet. American Ballet Theatre. Mariemma's Spanish Ballet. Coros Y Danzas of Spain.

ATHENS—August 1-September 15.

EDINBURGH—August 24-September 13. Ballet Premières at the Empire Theatre; Aug. 25-27, *Still She Wished for Company, Les Facheuses Racontres*, Ballet by Toye, Ballet by Larsen. Aug. 28-30, *Les Facheuses Racontres, Still She Wished for Company, Pierrot Lunaire, Octet*. Sept. 1-3, *Octet, Dreams, Pierrot Lunaire, Midsummer's Vigil*. Sept. 4-6, *Midsummer's Vigil, Dress Rehearsal, La Belle Dame sans Merci, Dreams*. Sept. 8-10, *La Belle Dame sans Merci, Dress Rehearsal, Hunger, Changement de Pied*. Sept. 11-13, *Changement de Pied*, Ballet by Larsen, *Hunger*, Ballet by Toye.
Spanish opera at the King's Theatre on Sept. 9, 11, 13, Antonio and company in *La Vida Breve* and *El Sombrero de Tres Picos*.

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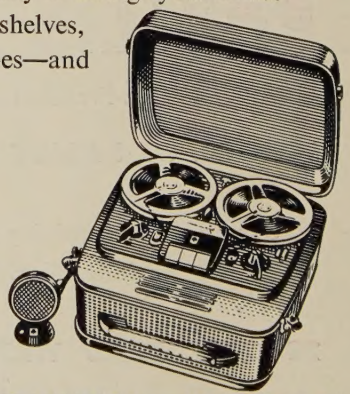

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